

DIMENSIONS OF COLOMBIAN PHILANTHROPY:
HOW GIVING IS LINKED TO SOCIAL CAPITAL

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Chapter I. Introduction

In recent years, social capital has emerged at the forefront of comparative research in the areas of philanthropy, community development and international aid. The predominant body of research has been conducted in the United States, Netherlands, and other Northern/Western contexts. From this body of knowledge, the academic community has begun to tease out how philanthropic traditions arise within and adapt to a given cultural context.

Social capital, as defined by Putnam, is “trust, norms and networks that can improve the efficiency of society by facilitating coordinated efforts” (1993, p. 116). Putnam theorizes that “social networks provide the channels through which we recruit one another for good deeds, and social networks foster norms of reciprocity that encourage attention to others’ welfare” (2000, p. 116-117).

Fukuyama (1995) melds concepts of social capital, civil society, and civic virtues to identify a unique cultural distinction between high-trust countries (United States, Germany, Japan) and low-trust countries (China, southern Italy, Korea, Latin America). According to Fukuyama, the most economically prosperous societies have high levels of social trust rooted in traditions of reciprocal moral obligations, inherited ethical habits, and shared values. High levels of trust and reciprocity allow members of society to cooperate with one another to realize positive economic outcomes. The lack of trust or presence of distrust inhibits civility, which, in turn, inhibits economic prosperity and democracy (Fukuyama, 1995). Like Fukuyama, Putnam (1993) and Banfield (1958), who each studied the cultural differences between northern and southern Italy, also note a

distinction between cultures with high trust and robust civic behavior and those with low trust and limited civic behavior.

Stemming from the assertions of Fukuyama, Putnam and Banfield, a theory has emerged that high levels of social capital is connected to high levels of philanthropic support (money and time), and low levels of social capital is connected to low levels of philanthropic support. This is to be expected since, theoretically, in cultures with less trust and civic behavior, there is a higher cost to giving and volunteering, and therefore people give less. Research conducted in American and Dutch communities suggests that a high level of philanthropic behavior is expected to be found in places where people share a high level of social capital (Putnam, 2000); that individuals who have more social capital in terms of access to social networks are more likely to be charitable (Brooks, 2005; Brown and Ferris, 2007); that a donor's perception that a nonprofit organization is trustworthy affects his or her decision to give (Bekkers, 2003); and that an individual's participation in different types of civic networks relies on varying levels of social trust (Uslaner, 2002).

The United States and Netherlands are each considered to be countries with high levels of social trust and dense networks of voluntary associations. What remains to be explored is the construction of philanthropic traditions within a low-trust, low social capital cultural context. If philanthropy is fueled by social capital, is the reverse also true that philanthropy is stunted by the lack of social capital? Much of what we know and assume about donor behavior is based on data amassed in countries with traditions of robust civil societies, dense associational networks and high levels of interpersonal trust. Perhaps our research about philanthropy is so concentrated in such cultural contexts

because it is there that we find more clearly defined nonprofit sectors and bountiful data about giving patterns and philanthropic trends. Relatively few social scientists have tested the relevancy of these theories in cultures outside of the Northern/Western context.

This lack of knowledge about traditions of giving and volunteerism in non-Northern/Western cultural contexts is concerning because social science research is often used to inform public policy and international aid decisions. A richer understanding of philanthropic behavior can be gained by studying traditions of giving and volunteerism in non-Western/Northern cultures. Do traditions of giving and volunteerism emerge in a non-Western/Northern cultural context that are distinct from or challenge conventional thinking about the role and meaning of philanthropy?

Colombia offers an interesting case study of the interplay between social capital and philanthropy because much is known about the Colombian citizenry's propensity to trust and associate. Additionally, the incredible growth of nonprofits in Colombia and Latin America since the early 1990s has spurred an increase in qualitative research surrounding Latin American philanthropy. Key to this discussion is the affirmation that traditions and practices of philanthropy are cultural constructs and the donors who create them are steeped in their own society's values, norms, history, and social pressures. Understanding the interplay between social capital and philanthropy in the Colombian context will require a shift in thinking about social capital from a *more or less* dynamic to an approach which examines the *types* of networks and trust common to Colombian citizens. The question posed in this paper is not *if* people in Colombia trust and associate, but *how*.

Recognizing the difficulties of collecting apples-to-apples data from two different cultural contexts, it must be noted that while much is known about Latin American philanthropy in general, little quantitative research could be identified which charts the behavior of individual donors in Colombia. This lack of research may reflect the relative newness and ambiguity of the Colombian nonprofit sector and the difficulty of obtaining reliable data in Colombia, which, in other countries, is easily gathered through panel surveys, tax filings, and nonprofit organization data. It should also be considered that since philanthropic traditions arise to mirror a particular cultural context, perhaps Colombia's traditions of giving and volunteering simply deviate from what scholars in Northern/Western contexts define as "philanthropy." Perhaps, in the Colombian culture, more giving and volunteerism occurs outside of the nonprofit sector, and therefore, the full scope of philanthropic activity cannot be accurately depicted from data compiled from nonprofit donor lists.

As an additional caveat, this paper incorporates the work of authors who use varying definitions of social capital, social networks, and social trust, and many of them debate the theoretical applications of these concepts. For the purposes of this paper, it is less important to debate semantics or any conceptual weaknesses the terminology may carry; rather, I intend to offer a better understanding of the Colombian context of social capital and how it has played a role in shaping Colombian traditions of giving and volunteering.

In Chapter II, I will chart the development of the Colombian context of social capital and explain how the Colombian citizenry trusts and associates with one another. In Chapter III, I will examine the literature which connects social capital to philanthropy.

In Chapter IV, I will examine Colombian traditions of giving and volunteering and attempt to link those traditions to the Colombian context of social capital. I will conclude in Chapter V by outlining considerations for future research conducted in non-Western/Northern contexts in the areas of social capital and philanthropic studies. Ultimately, this paper will develop the position that the role of philanthropy is, at a basic level, common to all societies, but that it may manifest in ways that are different in role and meaning. I hypothesize that donors in Colombia are embedded in and react to a distinct cultural context; that their philanthropic traditions have developed to mirror this cultural context; and that their philanthropic activities may differ in conception and in practice from Northern/Western contexts.

Chapter II. Social Capital in the Colombian Context

Social capital is generally understood as the social networks and interpersonal trust that enables groups of individuals to communicate, cooperate and interact in society (Putnam, 1993, 2000; Fukuyama, 2002). While multiple and often conflicting definitions of social capital have emerged since the 1980s and 1990s (as research in this area of social science has escalated) scholars generally agree that social capital is a cultural construct related to concepts of civility, social cohesion, and civic behavior. Social capital can be understood as the tools a society needs to self-organize (Anheier, 2007), to band together to defend collective interests and support shared needs (Fukuyama, 2002), or to institute informal means of social control (Rosero Bixby, 2006).

Over the past 20 years, the idea of social capital has gained momentum as an important economic factor, similar to human capital (education and skills) and financial capital (money used productively), that leads to building a prosperous society (Putnam, 2000). Unlike human and financial capital, which are economic tools used by an individual, social capital is an inherently collective phenomenon. Forming the foundation of social capital are norms of trust and reciprocity embodied in a civil society that fosters social cohesion by facilitating a sense of social inclusion among citizens (Anheier, 2007). However, while the deepest reservoirs of social capital are generally considered to be located within civil society, social capital can also be found within the family, the market, and the state (Fukuyama, 2002; Sudarsky, 1999). Social capital cannot be coerced; it is voluntary and spontaneous in nature. Social capital can be stimulated or stunted by the state or market sector (Putnam, 2000; Fukuyama, 2002).

Fukuyama reminds his readers that “not all societies have equal stocks of social capital” (2002, p. 27). Conventional theories hold that cultures with deep reservoirs of social capital tend to have high levels of generalized trust among citizens and complex webs of voluntary and associational networks (Putnam, 2000; Fukuyama, 1995). Examples of high trust, high associational cultures include the Netherlands, Germany, the United States, and Japan at varying degrees (Fukuyama, 1995, 2002; World Values Survey Databank, 2008).

Conversely, these same conventional theories hold that cultures with shallow reservoirs of social capital tend to have lower levels of generalized trust among citizens and fewer voluntary associations and social networks. Examples of low trust, low associational cultures that are often cited are those found in Latin America, Russia, Eastern Europe, and parts of Africa (Fukuyama, 1995, 2002; World Values Survey Databank, 2008).

Researchers attempt to measure the prevalence of social capital in a given community in two ways; first, through surveys that ask citizens to report their beliefs about who they can trust in their community and the frequency of their participation in voluntary and civic organizations; and second, through games and dilemmas that place citizens in simulated social situations in order to measure their inclination to trust and to reciprocate. The first method aggregates the responses of individuals to get a measurement of the whole community of respondents. The second method analyzes how individuals interact and behave with other members of their community in a controlled environment.

Utilizing the first method, social scientists participating in the 2005-2008 wave of the World Values Survey measure and analyze cultural values and civic behaviors. The World Values Survey Databank charts this information for 57 countries (48 of which participated in questions about trust and associations) and serves as a good platform for cross-cultural analysis. According to the Databank, Colombians are among the least trusting citizenries of the world. Only 14 percent of Colombians reportedly believe that “most people can be trusted,” while 85 percent of Colombians affirm “you can’t be too careful.” Comparatively, the other participating countries report an average of about 27 percent of survey respondents who believe that “most people can be trusted” and 69 percent believe that “you can’t be too careful.”

Colombians are also among the most civically disengaged citizenries when compared to citizens of other nations measured by the World Values Survey Databank. Nearly 94 percent of Colombians report that they are not members of any secular organization, including charitable organizations, sports and recreational groups, professional organizations, and civic organizations. A large percentage of Colombians do engage in religious organizations and churches, however. With 90% of Colombians reporting to be of the Roman Catholic faith (CIA World Factbook) it is no wonder that nearly 50% of Colombian citizens report that they are either active or inactive members of religious organizations (World Values Survey Databank, 2005-2008 wave).

At first glance, the stock of social capital in Colombia would seem to be concentrated within religious networks, but, according to some social capital theorists, religious participation should not contribute to building generalized trust and dense voluntary associations in a community (Fukuyama, 1995; Putnam, 2000). Putnam (2000)

controversially observes that strong religious participation in one predominate church can actually decrease the overall level of a society's social capital. This is because societies are theoretically built along varying levels of "bridging" and "bonding" networks (Putnam, 2000). A bridging network, as the term implies, spans social niches to link people to external assets, information, and networks. Unlike the inclusive nature of the bridging form, a bonding network is present in exclusive social niches, bonding people together in solidarity along their narrower ethnic, familial, or religious identities. Putnam writes that bonding social capital can create strong in-group loyalty and solidarity, forming the 'superglue' of society. Bridging social capital, on the other hand, acts as a social 'WD-40,' making possible cooperation among people who are not linked along narrower ethnic, kinship, or religious networks (Putnam, 2000).

"Bonding and bridging are not 'either-or' categories into which social networks can be neatly divided, but 'more-less' dimensions along which we can compare different forms of social capital" (Putnam, 2000, p. 23). Therefore, some cultures may have more bridging and less bonding, and others more bonding and less bridging. In countries where the majority of people believe there is only one true religion (such as those predominated by Catholicism or Islam) citizens tend to be less trusting of outsiders and more bonded through hierarchical, religious networks (Putnam, 2000; Fukuyama, 2002; Uslaner, 2002; Sudarsky, 2008). Therefore, bridging social capital is less likely to arise in cultures where people are predominately Catholic, like Colombia and other countries of Latin America, because people are believed to be less accepting of out-groups, and few religious networks span across social crevices to connect strangers. Conventional theories also hold that a strong civil society is a conglomeration of many bridging

networks and secular voluntary organizations, and that bonding networks and religious organizations do not necessarily contribute to the development of a strong civil society.

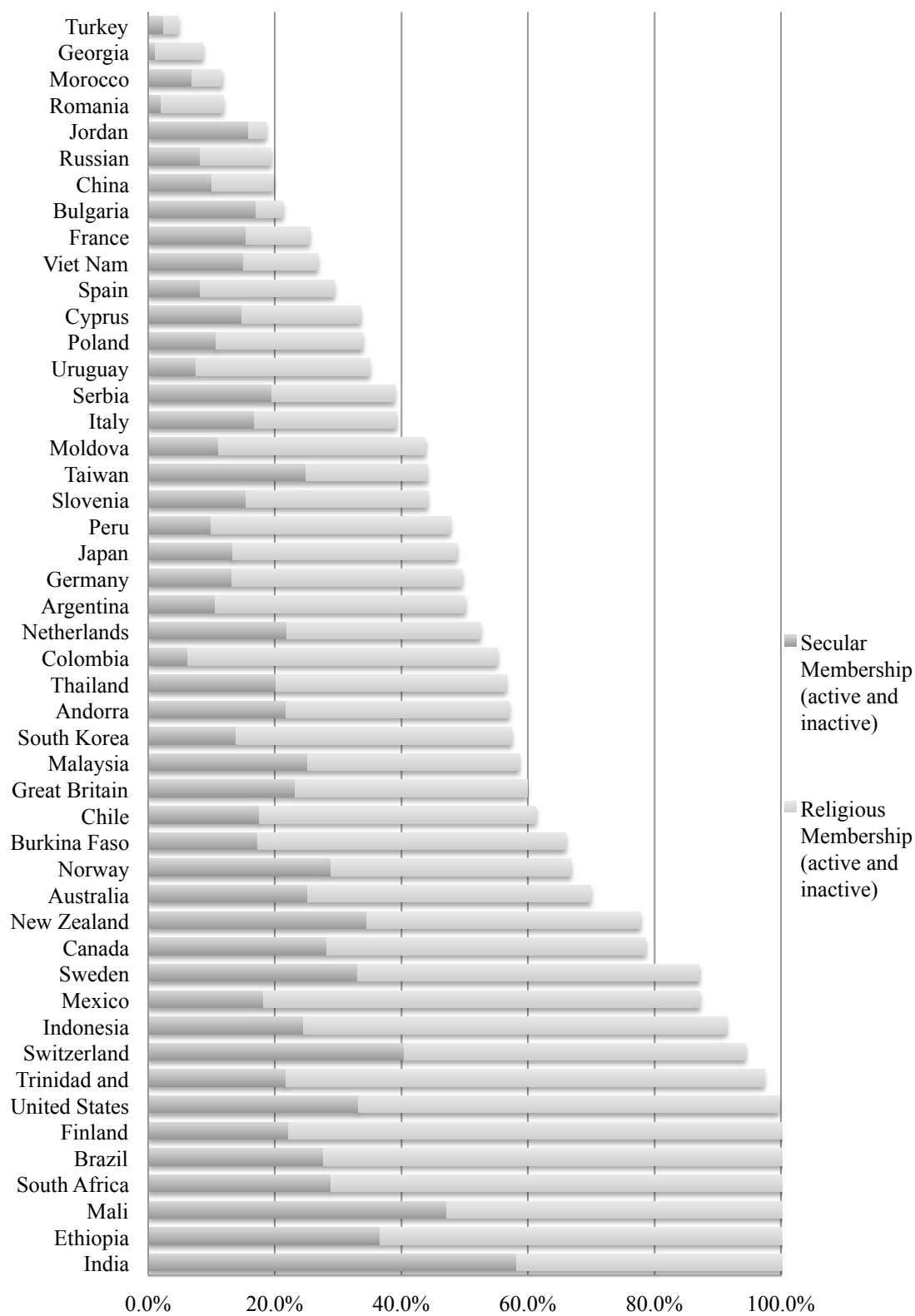
Contradicting these assertions, the Catholic Church in Latin America has been perhaps the most ardent supporter and protector of civil society during the region's darkest hours of authoritarianism, dictatorship and civil war (Thompson and Landim, 1997). In particular, the Liberation Theology of the Catholic Church set forth during the Medellin (Colombia) and Puebla (Mexico) Conferences in the latter half of the 20th Century actually allowed the Church to be the only civil society institution to sustain its structure and defend human and civil rights at a time of widespread and violent upheaval. Even today, the Church continues to serve as a major progressive force for defending the poor and marginalized and supporting both faith-based and secular charitable organizations (Villar, 1998).

Yet, it is precisely this predominance as a religious and social force in Latin American civil society that leads many social capital scholars like Putnam and Fukuyama to contend that the Catholic Church fails to build the extra-religious "bridging" networks and generalized trust that contributes to strong economies and secular collective action. Fukuyama (1995, 2002) sees the more recent liberalization of the Catholic Church coupled with the growing Protestant and Evangelical movements in Latin America as evidence of significant cultural change and a rise in the types of social capital termed by Putnam as "bridging". According to Fukuyama (1995, 2002), the sectarian nature of a society that embraces various small religious groups stimulates the formation of natural networks guided by values of honesty and trust, an inherent necessity for a higher level of voluntary participation from members, and a moral imperative to reach outside of insular

circles to welcome others to the faith. Though controversial, perhaps Fukuyama's overall point is that a plurality of religious organizations may contribute to building "bridging" social capital, but in countries where the majority of citizens are followers of one faith (i.e. predominantly Catholic or Islamic nations), the singularity of religion may contribute to more "bonding" social capital.

From a certain point of view, the level of secular membership could be considered as a kind of proxy for bridging social capital and religious membership for bonding social capital. As illustrated in Figure 1, data from the World Values Survey Databank indicates that while Colombia's secular membership is among the lowest in the world (at only 6.3% of Colombia's population reporting to be either active or inactive members of a secular organization), but when religious membership is added to the equation, Colombia's overall membership is comparatively average. This result may indicate that the Colombian citizenry engages in significantly more bonding social capital and significantly less bridging social capital than other citizenries of the world.

Figure 1. Global Comparison of Membership



John Sudarsky, chief researcher of BARCAS (Barometer of Social Capital in Colombia), a study financed by the Colombian government in the 1990s and 2000s, found that high levels of membership and trust in the Catholic Church is indicative of a society constructed along lines of strong hierarchical relationships. Sudarsky points out that despite high levels of membership and trust in the Catholic Church and religious organizations, Colombia remains on the low end of countries measured by the World Values Survey in terms of secular social capital (Sudarsky, 1999, 2008).

To arrive at this conclusion, Sudarsky tested and analyzed three factors of social capital in Colombia. The first is social capital itself, defined by Sudarsky as dimensions of solidarity, reciprocity, political participation, civic engagement, horizontal relationships (civil society and secular volunteer organizations), and hierarchical relationships (church, guilds, unions).

Sudarsky's second factor is trust and confidence in Colombia's institutional infrastructure and a sense of the public's control over the state. The second factor of trust and confidence is important since the passing of the 1991 Constitution in Colombia that (in a very Western model) made the people, and not the state, sovereign.

The third factor according to Sudarsky is faith in unvalidated sources of information (FUSI), which occurs as a result of isolation and a lack of interaction with social groups. FUSI decreases when a person regularly interacts within social networks, especially civil society organizations, because it is within such networks that citizens can independently and productively validate information, opinions, and beliefs (1999). High levels of FUSI may actually be associated with low levels of both bridging and bonding social capital since it indicates complete disengagement from associational networks.

Sudarsky (1998, 2007) asserts that civil society and voluntary organizations, while weak, are Colombia's deepest reservoirs of social capital, deeper than any other form of network in Colombian society. Disturbingly, Sudarsky's research indicates that between 1995 and 2007, Colombia's decline in membership of secular civil society organizations was one of the most serious in the world. The percentage of the Colombian population who reported NOT belonging to ANY voluntary organization jumped from 42 percent to 58 percent, for an increase of 38 percent. Volunteerism fell from 48 percent to 36 percent, for a decrease of 25 percent.

Contributing to these findings, Colombians' trust in institutional structures fell by 100 percent. Even membership in vertically articulated bonding organizations (Catholic churches, labor unions, and craftsmen guilds), which have been historically strong in Colombia, fell in density and participation, though trust in traditional religious organizations and the Catholic Church remains very strong. Confidence in national and municipal governments either grew or remained steady during this time period.

Sudarsky views a 133 percent increase in FUSI as the most serious problem for Colombia's future. Rising FUSI is an indicator of decreasing engagement and supports the concerning trend of widespread apathy among the Colombian people. Sudarsky writes that in a country where neither political parties nor the state provide trustworthy information to guide citizens and their actions, and where people avoid membership in civil society, citizens cannot independently validate information or their opinions. On the whole, these findings indicate an increasingly disengaged citizenry and a very low sense of the citizenry's own civic accountability or public liability. Without an organized civil society strategically supported by the state, Sudarsky concludes that people will remain

atomized and fragmented and therefore unable to self-organize and participate in a democratic government. Civil society, according to Sudarsky, should be strategically developed by the State because, as Putnam and Fukuyama have also conjectured, strong civil society promotes strong social capital, and strong social capital leads to a more prosperous nation.

The disengagement, atomization, and fragmentation of the Colombian people as documented in Sudarsky's research, is not a short-term blip, but part of a larger cycle of distrust fueled by a history of social disorder, corruption, and political opportunism. Douglas North's enlightening comparative study of the historical development of North and South America provides an interesting perspective to understanding of social capital in the Colombian perspective. According to North, Summerhill and Weingast (1999), after Christopher Columbus sailed to the New World, North and South America shared equal chances of economic profitability. The regions were colonized at the same time by expanding European powers; both were endowed with tremendous natural resources; each thrived on complex trade routes; and most of the colonies within them received independence within the same 40-year timespan. The differences in political life, culture, and economic prosperity of the two regions afterward, therefore, were mainly determined by cultural habits, norms and expectations inherited from European colonists. North Americans benefited from their decentralized, parliamentary English heritage, which secured property rights and strong limits on the powers of the government, but South Americans were cursed with a system inherited from Spanish colonists of centralized authoritarianism, familism, and clientelism (North, Summerhill and Weingast, 1999).

Path dependence from either Spain or England determined whether New World societies reached a state of political order or disorder. Political order exists “when participants find it in their interest, given their expectations about the actions of others, to obey the written and unwritten rules that call for respect for one another” (North, Summerhill and Weingast, 1999, p. 4). For order to occur, citizens must be able to trust in the security of one’s life, family and livelihood. North Americans, for much of their history, have prospered under a (mostly) stable and legitimate government, a credible justice system, and widespread belief in the trustworthiness of their fellow citizens. With a few noteworthy exceptions (slavery, Jim Crow, McCarthyism), these reliable and legitimate institutions have allowed North Americans to “spontaneously socialize” with each other (Fukuyama, 1995), and build a reservoir of the powerful generalized trust required to span across social niches and connect citizens to assets outside of their insular family networks.

Disorder, on the other hand, occurs when the rights and privileges of individuals and organizations are uncertain and when people do not conform to broadly shared beliefs, formal and informal norms, or formal laws (North, Summerhill and Weingast, 1999). Citizens behave very differently under disorder than order, “that is, when they fear for their lives, their families, and their sources of livelihood” (North, Summerhill and Weingast, 1999, p. 1). Much of South American history and culture has been profoundly affected by an absence of well-defined and widely accepted rights, nonconformity to constantly changing norms and laws, and rent-seeking by the social elite and political strongmen who seek to gain and defend their privileges at the expense of others. In an environment of disorder, citizens often prefer the emergence of an authoritarian regime to

provide a coerced order and protect their assets. In the absence of such a regime or a credible and legitimate state, a great many groups may grapple for power, and political violence ensues.

Disorder has been the case in much of Colombia's history. Colombia's infamous Marxist guerrilla and the paramilitary groups who oppose them were mobilized in the middle 20th century from a widespread desire to seek 'private' justice when the state was too weak, too disinterested or too preoccupied to provide average citizens with legitimate legal recourse and civic representation (Jimeno, 2001). According to Jimeno's 2001 account of violence and social life in Colombia, justice-seeking through violence continues to be fueled by resources concentrated in personal networks, indicating the presence of what some scholars term as "bad civil society" (Edwards, 2004). The number of people who have been internally displaced as a result of the continued armed conflict is estimated to number between 1.8 and 3.5 million. With 38.8 intentional homicides per 100,000 people annually, Colombia remains the leader for crime on the South American continent (UNODC, 2007).

Beyond the armed conflict between the guerrilla, paramilitary, and Colombian armed forces, social inequality and a country's distribution of income has a strong impact on the level of interpersonal trust among the citizenry (Uslaner, 2002) and fuels much of Colombia's history and modern-day reputation of political upheaval. Uslaner (2002) predicts that more than any other factor, a widening gap between rich and poor leads to declining generalized trust in society. With almost half of all citizens falling below the poverty line, Colombia ranks 8th in the world and highest in Latin America for having

the most unequal society, according to the GINI index (CIA World Factbook, 2008)¹.

Despite accelerating economic growth, Colombia's poor continue to be poor, while the rich continue to get richer, creating increased social and political exclusion by social class (CIA World Factbook, 2008).

The experience of widespread violence and conflict between social classes has lead to a cycle of reinforced social fragmentation. Jimeno writes,

The confusion in distinguishing between violent actors, and the easily crossed thin line separating people as friends and enemies on opposite sides..." leads to "...a vast feeling of fragmentation, understood as being the sensation that society has fragmented into pieces either dominated or fought over by a great variety of armed actors in the face of which the individual is found to have no protection (2001, p. 224).

When citizens at all socio-economic levels can no longer differentiate between enemies and victims, it becomes difficult to identify and punish social deviants through commonly held laws and a legitimate justice system, and informally through widely shared unwritten norms and mores. Theoretically, therefore, social fragmentation and continual political violence fuels widespread distrust among the Colombian citizenry. People retreat to their homes, finding truth through experience in the adage 'you can trust no one but your family' and invest their assets not in economically productive activities, but in protecting and defending their kin and livelihoods.

¹ The GINI index rankings of other Latin American nations include Bolivia (9th), Brazil (10th), Guatemala (11th), Honduras (12th), Paraguay (14th), El Salvador (15th), Chile (16th), Panama (17th), Dominican Republic (24th), Peru (25th), Mexico (27th), Costa Rica (28th), Uruguay (33rd), Ecuador (34th), Nicaragua (46th), Argentina (53rd), Venezuela (56th). Scandinavian countries are among the most socioeconomically equal nations on the GINI index, including Sweden (136th- last on the list), Norway (134th), Finland (125th), and the Netherlands (108th). English-speaking nations rank in the middle, including the United States (39th), United Kingdom (92nd) and Canada (101st).

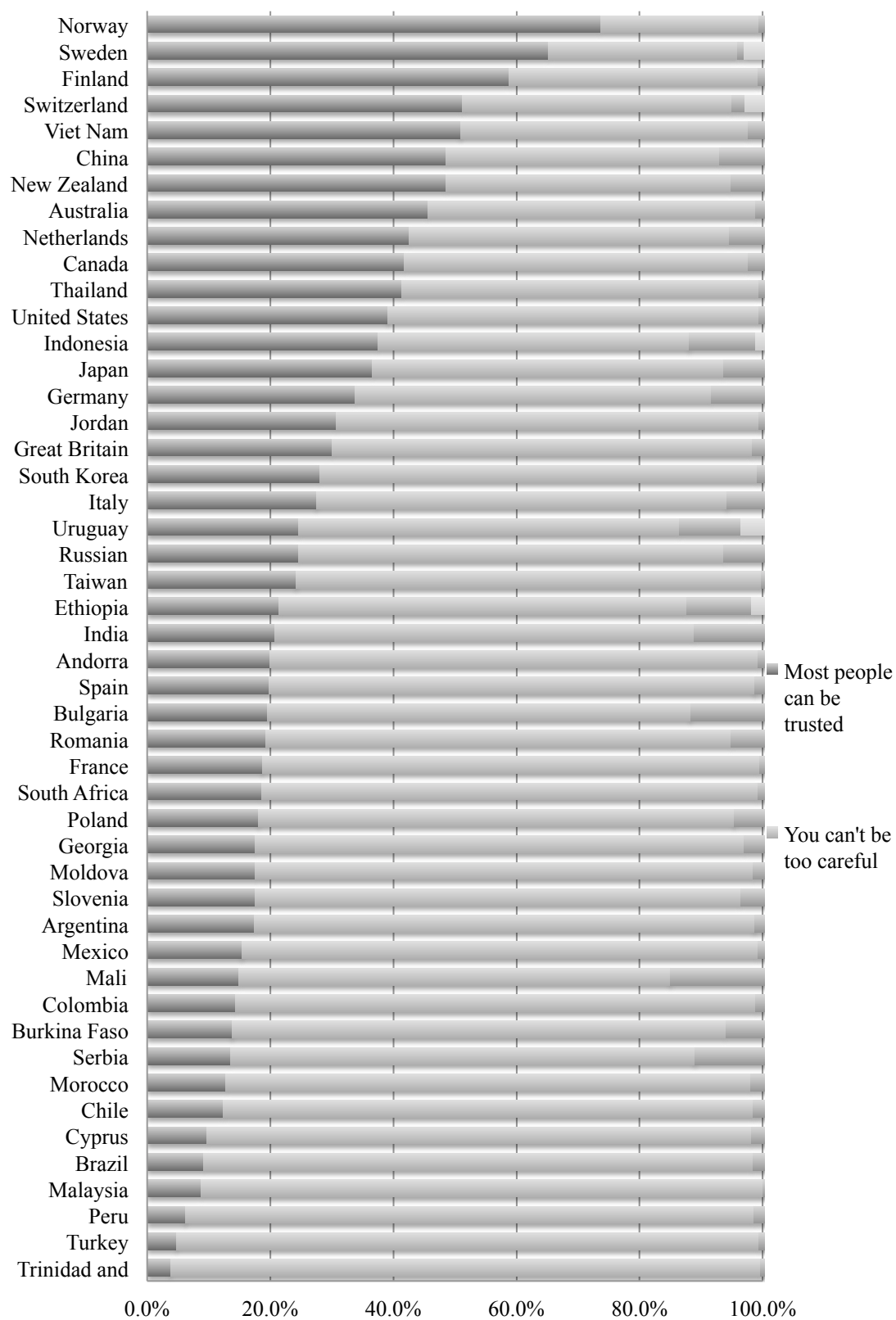
Distrust among Colombian citizens in contemporary day-to-day exchanges is documented by Cárdenas, Chong and Ñopo (2009) who, through a series of surveys, trust games and social dilemmas, compare group-oriented behavior in six capital cities throughout Latin America (Bogotá, Buenos Aires, Caracas, Lima, Montevideo and San José). According to the authors, a person can choose to cooperatively organize and pool risk with others in a group context, or he or she can choose to free ride even though everyone in the group would benefit most if everyone cooperated. People make decisions to cooperate or free ride based on their sense of group affiliation, sympathy toward others, and belief in the generalized trustworthiness of others in the group. Trusting others involves the possibility that others participants will defect, creating net losses for the trusting person. If most people are trustworthy, trust is a productive resource, but if few people are trustworthy, gullibility can be dangerous. Distrust and uncertainty about the actions of others “exacerbates free riding, thus reducing opportunities to produce socially efficient outcomes” (Cárdenas, Chong and Ñopo, 2009, p. 46). On the other hand, if all or most of the participants are able to trust and reciprocate that trust, the group’s net social welfare increases. Reinforced expectations about the honest behavior of others are the main driver of generalized trust, reciprocity and cooperation. Participants who are both trusting and trustworthy will be more likely to trust others in the future, creating a virtuous cycle of reciprocity.

Cárdenas, Chong and Ñopo conclude that on the whole, the propensity to trust and cooperate among Latin Americans is similar to that found in other regions of the world, however participants in Bogotá deviated from the other five capital cities. In a trust game, where players were asked to voluntarily contribute some percentage (0%,

25%, 50%, 75% or 100%) of imaginary assets to the public good based on their expectation that others in their group would also participate, Bogotanos were by far the most likely to contribute nothing, indicating their distrust of others to reciprocate. In total, nearly one third of Bogotanos contributed 0% of their money to the public good – more than double the average of all other Latin American citizens who contributed nothing. In the risk-pooling game, citizens from Bogotá were by far the least willing to participate in risk pooling or participate in shared group accounts. Bogotanos were also the most likely to expect zero participation from others in their group during a risk-pooling activity.

The work of Cárdenas, Chong and Ñopo demonstrates that Bogotanos are less trusting than people in other major Latin American cities. Corroborating this piece of evidence, the World Values Survey Databank provides a comparative analysis of trust for countries throughout the world. As demonstrated in Figure 2, Colombia ranks 36th out of 47 nations in the percentage of survey respondents who affirmatively answered, “most people can be trusted.” However, the citizens of Peru, Brazil and Chile are slightly less trusting than Colombians.

Figure 2. Global Comparison of Trust



All of these results indicate that the Colombian citizenry has a relatively low level of generalized social trust. Since civil society is considered to a deep reservoir of social capital, declining participation in voluntary organizations could perpetuate a serious decline in generalized social trust. “As the social fabric of a community becomes more threadbare,” writes Putnam, “its effectiveness in transmitting and sustaining reputations (of trustworthiness) declines, and its power to undergird norms of honesty, generalized reciprocity and thin trust is enfeebled” (2000, p. 136).

“Thin” trust (Putnam’s terminology for generalized trust), is the ability to trust and relate to people outside of insular personal networks - strangers in a coffee shop for example - based on some expectation of reciprocity and trustworthiness (Putnam, 2000). “Thick” trust (Putnam’s terminology for particularized trust) is embedded in strong and frequent personal relationships, such as family members and long-time colleagues at work. Thin trust fuels an active community life through bridging networks, while thick trust reinforces bonding networks. “Thin trust is even more useful than thick trust, because it extends the radius of trust beyond the roster of people with whom we can know personally,” writes Putnam (2000, p. 136).

Related to thin and thick trust is “spontaneous sociability” described by Francis Fukuyama (1995) as a subset of social capital. Spontaneous sociability, according to Fukuyama, “refers to the wide range of intermediate communities distinct from the family or those deliberately established by government” (p. 27). Spontaneous sociability relies on a foundation of generalized (thin) trust, or the expectation within the community that others will be honest and cooperative. Spontaneous sociability is important because,

In any modern society, organizations are being constantly created, destroyed, and modified. The most useful kind of social capital is often not the ability to work under the authority of a traditional community or group, but the capacity to form new associations and to cooperate within the terms of reference they establish (Fukuyama, 1995, p. 27).

Fukuyama warns that in communities with widespread distrust, people cannot engage in spontaneous sociability and can only cooperate under an enforced system of formal rules and regulations. Laws and coercion can replace trust in society as a means to cooperate. The coercive enforcement of laws in a distrustful society impose a high transaction cost on “all forms of economic activity, a tax that high-trust societies do not have to pay” (Fukuyama, 1995, p. 27-28).²

Varying levels of bridging-bonding networks, thin-thick trust, and spontaneous sociability are evident in comparisons of different cultures. Fukuyama (1995) identifies three possible “paths to sociability,” based on where social capital is concentrated in different cultures and, concurrently, how cultures organize their economic institutions. On the first path, citizens place the majority of their trust in family and kinship networks, or, using Putnam’s terminology, “thick trust” and “bonding” networks. Citizens within the first thick-bonding path do not tend to trust those outside of their family networks, and therefore arrange their economic and associational ties around kinship. Fukuyama suggests that this path can be observed in countries that have many small, family-owned and managed businesses but few professionally managed corporations. Businesses can

² Philanthropy is one type of economic activity which is sensitive to transaction costs and benefits. Economists believe that donors are motivated in part by the “price” of giving, and that the level of giving is sensitive to the costs and benefits of social norms and expectations, nonprofit output and quality, the social status and contributions of other donors, and private benefits including recognition and social status (Vesterlund, 2006).

grow only as large as the family can manage. Businesses are constrained by trust because the family cannot trust professionals from outside of the family to manage or steward their assets.

On the second path, citizens place greater trust in their community members and regularly interact with them through voluntary associations. Putnam would categorize this second path as rich in the thin trust and bridging networks that connect people to resources and networks outside of their families and close friends. Unlike the familistic tendencies of the first path, the second thin-bridging path typically produces large, professionally managed corporations and complex networks of voluntary associations. People are able to trust and work productively with individuals outside of their family or religious networks.

The third path is state authoritarianism. Citizens place their trust in the state and its power to protect their assets. The third path often results in the creation of state-owned and operated enterprises. The first thick-bonding path and the third authoritarianistic path are closely related and often overlap. Familistic cultures in which citizens lack trust in strangers and those not “bonded” to them through kinship, religious, political or ethnic ties, are often unable to create and protect large, durable economic organizations (Fukuyama, 1995). Because of their deficit of trust toward outsiders, they look to the state to protect and enforce their rights to life and livelihoods.

Banfield in 1958 reached a similar conclusion about the cultural liability of familism in his description of civic behavior in a small village in southern Italy. Banfield found that in an atomized society where a person can trust no one but his or her relatives, “the weak will favor a regime which will maintain order with a strong hand” (in this case,

Fascism), because it protects peasants from social exclusion by the elite, and from mal-intentioned opportunism by all others (p. 93). If a culture's stock of social capital (trust and networks) was depicted on a graph, the familistic society would be represented by a "U" curve signifying that society is organized along lines of kinship and the authoritarian state, but very little spontaneous sociability (civil society) in between.

Because of rampant opportunism and corruption, many Latin American countries experience a persistent cycle of social disorder that can only be squelched by the strong arm of the state. Fukuyama observes:

I have seldom encountered a Latin American audience that did not think that their society suffered from a severe crisis of trust. This crisis manifests itself in a variety of forms. Economically, the greater part of gross domestic product (GDP) in most Latin American countries is produced by family-owned businesses – the large majority owned by a relatively small circle of ten, twenty, or thirty prominent families... Business life in most of Latin America remains, in other words, familistic: the strongest and most reliable bonds of trust are among family members, or else among relatively small circles of close personal friends. Social capital, thus, resides primarily in kinship networks, and in many respects such networks constitute an important social asset... A deficit of trust toward outsiders means that one's strongest relationships of trust are reserved for family and close friends, creating the cultural conditions for a two-tiered moral system in which one feels few compunctions in behaving opportunistically toward others (2002, p. 27).

The particular path to sociability a country takes depends on historical turning points (Putnam, 1993; Fukuyama, 1995). "Path dependence can produce durable differences in performance between two societies, even when the formal institutions, resources and relative process, and individual preferences in the two are similar"

(Putnam, 1995, p. 179). In the case of Colombia, social fragmentation, high inequality, and sustained political violence drastically reduces the prevalence of thin trust among neighbors and strangers, inhibits the development of bridging networks, and shatters the proclivity of spontaneous sociability and civil society. Instead, in this atomized society, people “bond” through close personal networks which are fused together by thick trust and, in the absence of a dense civil society, rely on a central government to provide order through bureaucracy and coercion.

It would not be accurate to claim that Colombia lacks social capital at all, but rather that it lacks a high level of bridging social capital or spontaneous sociability. Fukuyama acknowledges,

Most developing countries actually have an abundance of social capital in the form of kinship groups or traditional social groups like lineages, tribes or village associations. What they lack are more modern, broad-radius organizations that connect across traditional ethnic, class, or status boundaries and serve as the basis for modern political and economic organizations (2002, p. 34).

Colombian society, it would appear, is structured along lines of bonding networks and thick trust. Colombians reserve trust for family members and religious networks. They do not tend to trust strangers or actively engage in spontaneous sociability within a secular civil society. As Chapter III will show, the organization of society is key to the development of philanthropic traditions. A Western/Northern understanding of philanthropy assumes that giving is usually extra-familial, not influenced by the state, and organized within the nonprofit sector. According to the literature (which most often pertains to research developed in North America, Western Europe and Scandinavia)

philanthropy is most likely to flourish when citizens experience high levels of thin trust and when they have access to a dense web of social networks. It would be easy to inductively assume that, on the flip side, cultures which are characterized by bonding networks and thick trust are likely to have low levels of philanthropic giving. However, this assumption may be false or biased toward a Western model of philanthropy.

As Chapter IV will demonstrate, Colombian philanthropic traditions flourish despite the fact that Colombian culture does not exhibit a strong network of bridging civil society organizations or thin trust between strangers. Instead, as John Sudarsky of the BARCAS study found, the most significant source of social capital in the Colombian context may actually be within bonding and vertically articulated networks such as the church, central government, and family-owned business because it is within these hierarchical institutions that citizens place their trust and produce collective action. Spontaneous socialization and a horizontally articulated civil society is not natural to Colombian culture, and because of this, philanthropy may take place outside of nonprofit organizations. Sudarsky (1999) explains,

The institutions that vertically articulate society have been discussed in the literature. Generally these are seen as obstacles to social capital, as they block direct access of citizens to the State. In Latin America, with the continuous reference to fascism and its state corporatism, they are seen with special fear, a fear that fits just too well with the lack of public representation of interests – no matter how socially originated they are – and the traditional mandate to represent the “common good.” However, if what you have is a fragmented and atomized society, it is possible that this vertical articulation is a powerful source of social capital, especially as it generates commitment to decisions collectively achieved and the democratic governability that such process can generate. This is the problem presented to

the data BARCAS gathered. There, the different forms of vertical articulation were directed towards a positive contribution to social capital and the significance and polarity of such relationships tested piece by piece. The results indicate a positive relationship of the aggregated dimension to social capital, without any individual variable having a direct effect on it (p. 19).

As the following chapters will show, a bonding-thick culture may not tend to have a dense network of nonprofit and civil society organizations in which it concentrates philanthropic action, but the people are no less generous. In fact, Colombian philanthropy may be just as significant as other cultures but channeled through a different social model characterized by bonding networks and thick trust. Traditions of giving and volunteerism may be articulated in ways that are not considered “philanthropy” in Northern/Western societies.

Chapter III. The interplay between social capital and philanthropic giving

As research in philanthropic studies has escalated in recent years, academics have investigated donor behavior through a series of disciplinary lenses, including political science, economics, sociology, and psychology. It is important to study donor behavior because, as Versterlund points out, “if we do not understand why people give, then how can we encourage them to become donors or to increase their contributions, and how can we predict the effect changes in the economic environment will have on giving?” (2006, p. 568). Emerging theories on social capital integrate the more traditional fields of study to better understand philanthropic behavior from an integrated cultural perspective. Bekkers argues that disciplinary boundaries “narrow our vision on civic engagement; studies from different disciplinary perspectives are incomplete because they disregard the role of the variables that are part of the other discipline” (2005, p. 440). This chapter provides a review of the literature that uses the more integrative approach of social capital to understand donor behavior. It is important to once again point out that the majority of this type of thinking and research has been conducted in the United States and the Netherlands (which are examples of nations with bridging-thin cultures). Therefore, there is an inherent cultural bias in the research which links social capital and donor behavior.

American social scientist Robert Putnam has become known as the leading proponent of the study of social capital. Through his acclaimed books and work at Harvard University, Putnam advanced the comparative study of the linkages between networks, trust and generosity in the United States and Italy. Since the early 1990s,

Putnam has developed the much of the terminology and research agenda for the study of social capital.³

Putnam's work in this area begins with *Making Democracy Work* (1992), in which he describes the cultural differences in civic engagement between northern and southern Italy. Putnam found that strong traditions of civic engagement among the citizens of northern Italy made voluntary collective action possible and preferable, while the citizens of southern Italy were unable to overcome the immediate material interests of the nuclear family in order work together to improve community conditions. Putnam observes, "Voluntary cooperation is easier in a community that has inherited a substantial stock of social capital, in the form of norms of reciprocity and networks of civic engagement" (p. 167).

Putnam develops a stronger theoretical link between social capital and philanthropic action in his seminal work, *Bowling Alone*, in which he documents declining civic engagement in modern day United States (2000). Putnam's research charts the civic behaviors of Americans over the past century by analyzing over 100 years of Gallup Polls, Roper Social and Political Trends archive, Census Bureau statistics, General Social Survey archives, life style surveys, membership data of major organizations such as Moose, Kiwanis, and Parent-Teacher Associations and other sources. Putnam predicts a causal link between civic engagement and generosity, writing,

Social networks provide the channels through which we
recruit one another for good deeds, and social networks
foster norms of reciprocity that encourage attention to

³ Since Putnam published *Making Democracy Work* in 1992 and *Bowling Alone* in 2000, his theories on social capital and the decline of American community have prompted much discussion and criticism. Leslie Lenkowsky in 2000 reviews the critiques of Putnam in his article, Still 'Bowling Alone'?

others' welfare. Thus... volunteering and philanthropy and even spontaneous 'helping' are all strongly predicted by civic engagement (Putnam 2000, p. 117).

Contradicting more traditional inquiries into donor behavior, Putnam asserts that civic engagement outweighs human capital (wealth, education, age, family status, and altruism) as a predictor of charitable giving and volunteerism. "Joiners," according to Putnam, are more likely to engage in philanthropy because they are "more tolerant, less cynical, and more empathetic to the misfortunes of others" (p. 288).

Civic engagement, and in particular volunteerism, is in Putnam's view a habit-forming behavior. "Volunteering fosters more volunteering... organizational involvement seems to inculcate civic skills and a lifelong disposition toward altruism" (Putnam, 2000, p. 121). Putnam controversially cautions readers not to confuse civic engagement and philanthropy as the former refers to "doing with" and the latter refers to "doing for." According to Putnam, "a check in an envelope, no matter how generous, cannot have that same effect (as civic engagement)" (2000, p. 116).⁴

Other academics have been influenced by Putnam's work, and multiple studies have been published which aim to more fully understand the linkages between civic engagement, social trust, and generosity. Several schools of thought have emerged. First are scholars who assert that there is a causal link between engagement in social networks and generosity. Others suggest that there is a causal link between social trust and generosity. A third theory has emerged that joining, trusting, human capital, and

⁴ Putnam's distinction between "doing for" and "doing with" is often challenged in academia as well as by professional fundraisers. It is often argued that fundraising events encourage donors and volunteers to "do with" and "do for" at the same time. For example, volunteers of the Walk for the Cure event organized by the Susan G. Komen Foundation recruit others in their own social networks – family, friends, neighbors, colleagues, etc. – to raise money and awareness about breast cancer.

philanthropy are essentially interrelated. The following literature review follows the development of different perspectives on social capital.

In the year 2000, the U.S.-based Roper Center released the Social Capital Community Benchmark Survey (“SCCBS”), a master databank developed at the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University. The Survey included a national sample of about 3,000 respondents in 42 communities throughout the United States. In total, roughly 29,700 households were surveyed during the year 2000. Respondents were asked about their associational activities and attitudes about their local community. Emerging from the initial survey were eleven “dimensions of social capital,” including social trust, inter-racial trust, diversity of friendships, participation in conventional politics, participation in protest politics, civic leadership, associational involvement, informal socializing, giving and volunteering, faith-based engagement and equality of civic engagement across the community. Academics have used this rich pool of data to develop a richer understanding of the interplay between social capital and philanthropy.

Utilizing data from the SCCBS, Brown and Ferris (2007) echo Putnam in their finding that on an individual level, social capital (networks and trust) may be more influential than human capital (education, wealth, age). Brown and Ferris explain that previous philanthropic research did not consider social capital as a potential variable and, therefore, overstated the impact of education, wealth and age as the strongest predictors of charitable giving and volunteerism. According to Brown and Ferris, social capital most significantly predicts three forms of generous behavior in American society. An individual’s access to social networks significantly predicts his or her giving to secular causes. Secondly, an individual’s religiosity is, not surprisingly, the leading predictor of

giving to religious causes and organizations. And thirdly, an individual's level of trust in others is the leading predictor of volunteerism.

Brooks (2005) also utilizes data from the SCCBS to determine how trust influences charitable giving and formulate his theory of the "social trust elasticity of giving." Brooks, an economist, predicts that social trust, which is not costly in terms of time or money, should have a stronger impact on charity than associational networks, which are costly in terms of time and money. Group activities that create an abundance of "warm glow," such as participating in a church fundraiser, should have a higher elasticity of giving than those that do not, such as voting in an election. Secondly, Brooks found that trust, which produces only a moderate glow but requires little time or money, has a moderate elasticity of giving. Thirdly, political involvement, which requires a lot of time but yields little warm glow, has the lowest elasticity of giving. He concludes that charitable giving is a "beneficial consequence" of volunteerism and trust, but is not influenced by political involvement.

Contrary to Putnam who believes that engagement in social networks leads to increased charitable giving, Uslaner (2002) finds that trust, not civic engagement, makes a person more generous. According to Uslaner's own compilation of research, of the many human capital and social capital factors that make a person more likely to be a "joiner" or a "donor," social trust has the strongest impact. "Trustors" have optimistic beliefs about human nature and faith in the good intentions of others, according to Uslaner. "People with faith in others ... take active roles in their communities, but civic engagement has no effect on trust" (Uslaner, 2002, p. 128).

Furthermore, Uslaner asserts that the kinds of social capital celebrated by Putnam in his studies in the United States and Italy, such as bowling leagues and choral groups (1992, 2000), may actually reinforce patterns of homogeneity because they rely on the bonds of insular social groups. “Congregating with your own kind thus might destroy moralistic trust and instead build in-group, or particularized trust” (Uslaner, p. 5). In other words, “bonding” with others in our own social circles does not make us more likely to trust strangers or build the powerful “bridging” social capital that fuels productivity. Uslaner theorizes that unlike other forms of civic engagement, philanthropy is unique in that it “connects us with people who are different from ourselves. (Charitable giving and volunteering) call upon ethical ideals that tie us to the idea that we have a responsibility for people in our moral community” (Uslaner, 2002, p. 118).

Uslaner’s research also suggests that different forms of civic engagement rely on different levels of trust. As demonstrated in Figure 3, participation in charitable organizations relies on higher levels of social trust than other forms of civic engagement in American society (Uslaner, 2002, p 128).

Figure 3. Civic Engagement and Trust in the United States			
A. Volunteering and Charitable Contributions			
High Trust	Middle Trust	No Effect	Mixed Effects
Arts and Culture Education	Health/hospitals Human services Youth	Informal Private Recreation Work-Related Politics/Environment Civic Organizations	Religion
B. Group Membership			
High Trust	Middle Trust	No Effect	Negative Effect/ Mixed Effects
Business/Professional Arts and Culture Social	Service Groups Sports Self-help Women Education Politics Fraternities/Sororities (c)	Labor Unions Hobbies Neighborhood Farm Youth Civic Groups Ethnic	Religion Veterans

Source: Uslaner, 2002, page 127.

Data compilations:

- (a) 1996 General Social Survey, 1996 Giving and Volunteering survey, 19996 Pew survey of metropolitan Philadelphia
- (b) 1972 and 1996 ANES, 1996 Giving and Volunteering survey, and General Social Survey for 1975, 1978, 1980, 1983, 1984, 1986, 1987, 1988, 1989, 1990, 1991, 1993, and 1994.
- (c) Generally small positive effects, mostly on the borderline of statistical significance

Dutch researcher Rene Bekkers (2003) reaches a similar conclusion to Uslaner that trust influences the amount of money that people give to charitable organizations, but that the relationship between trust and giving is not reciprocal. Trust may influence an individual's decision to give a donation, but giving does not increase the individual's level of trust. Bekkers writes,

There are good reasons to expect that the relationship runs from trust to giving, and not vice versa. Because charitable donations are usually anonymous, donors usually do not know the other donors, nor do they know the recipients... To the extent that volunteers collect money, they are usually persons who are unknown to the donors. It is hard to imagine how people can evolve into trusting human beings through the exchange of some small change for a 'thank you' by a strange person collecting money for a charity, let alone through anonymous donations by writing a check. It is much more likely that somehow, some people acquired a higher level of trust in fellow citizens than others and that these preexisting differences affect the willingness to give to charitable causes (p. 598).

Bekkers and Bowman (2009) utilize the Giving in the Netherlands Panel Study of 2003 and find that the decision to start or quit volunteering is rooted in generalized trust. People who have high levels of generalized (thin) trust and altruistic values are "more likely to start volunteering, are less likely to quit, and are more likely to have charitable confidence" (p. 891). Bekkers and Bowman question whether a recent trend of declining levels of confidence in charitable organizations among Dutch citizens would result in fewer volunteers overall. They find that while generalized (thin) trust and altruistic values has an effect on volunteerism, the level of a citizenry's confidence in charities does not have a significant effect on the overall level of volunteerism in the Netherlands. Likewise, the level volunteerism does not have a significant effect on charitable confidence. However, the authors assert, "*individual* organizations should be concerned about a loss of charitable confidence in *them in particular* because a signal becomes less credible when an organization is criticized externally and is confronted with a loss of charitable confidence by the public at large" (p. 894).

Nonprofit organizations are often perceived as more trustworthy than profit-making enterprises because they are prohibited from distributing profits to shareholders. Instead of a profit motive, nonprofit organizations are driven by their charitable mission to improve the welfare of others. Nonprofit organizations are most likely to be found in situations of information asymmetry, which arise when it is difficult for the average consumer to get reliable information on the quality of services provided (such as in the provision of healthcare and social services). Consumers and donors commonly perceive they can trust a nonprofit organization more than a for-profit organization because they can assume that no private shareholders are profiting from their misfortune. Religious organizations, in particular, have played an important role in facilitating and providing charity throughout history. Religious organizations impart a moral imperative among their members to fulfill a social contract or “God’s work,” and are therefore often assumed to be trustworthy.

Donors must be able to ascertain whether or not a nonprofit is trustworthy and legitimately seeking to fulfill its charitable mission. “In the absence of perfect information, or high costs of information, donors rely on their impression of trustworthiness” to make decisions about donations (Bekkers, 2003, p. 598). Non-legitimate organizations that free-ride on the public’s trust but are discovered to have violated their social contract reduce the public’s trust in the third sector and support of charitable causes (Bekkers, 2003; Bekkers and Bowman, 2009).

According to Bekkers (2003), mechanisms that increase the transparency of nonprofits’ fundraising practices and use of charitable dollars increase the public’s overall level of confidence in charities. In the United States, most nonprofit

organizations must provide this financial information to the public through the IRS Form 990. Watchdog organizations like Guidestar and Charity Navigator use the Form 990 to monitor the effectiveness and transparency of nonprofit organizations. In the Netherlands, where the government does not require nonprofits to file a publically available financial document, the Dutch Central Bureau on Fundraising has developed an accreditation system for nonprofit organizations. To receive the seal of accreditation, Dutch nonprofits must abide by rules that govern fundraising practices, organizational transparency, board selection and governance, and planning and evaluation. Bekkers (2003) found that “people who know the accreditation seal are actually more trusting of charities than who do not” (p. 603). Additionally, people who know the accreditation seal were also more generous, giving 71 Euros more than those who do not (Bekkers, 2003).

Wiepking and Mass (2009), who also utilize data from the Giving in the Netherlands Panel Study of 2003, aim to understand why people with more social and human capital are more generous. Wiepking and Mass find strong evidence that human capital factors (education, trust, wealth and cognitive ability) and social network extension are interrelated when it comes to explaining charitable giving. The link between generosity and civic engagement may have less to do with size or density of social networks and more to do with the human capital factors that propel productivity within them. Wiepking and Mass provide three explanations for this finding. First, having a larger social network gives one more access to charitable markets and decreases the transaction costs of making a donation. It also increases the likelihood of receiving charitable solicitations. Secondly, some networks – especially religious and service

organizations – reinforce strong positive norms for charitable giving among members. Finally, formal education is linked to increased charitable giving. Not only do people with more education have larger financial resources from which to give, there is also evidence to support the theory that people with more formal education also have higher cognitive abilities which enable them to comprehend the abstract needs of distant others. Additionally, people with more formal education are likely to be more trusting, and higher levels of trust leads to increased generosity.

It must be noted that while the aforementioned studies conducted by Putnam, Brown and Ferris, Uslaner, Bekkers and Bowman, and Wiepking and Mass demonstrate a link between social capital and philanthropic giving (even though exactly how social capital and philanthropy is linked is still unclear), the studies were developed and concentrated in the United States and the Netherlands. Both of these countries are characterized as having bridging-thin cultures, robust civil societies, legitimate government systems, and productive and developed economies. When data from philanthropic research compiled in bridging-thin cultures is analyzed, the level of charitable giving to nonprofit organizations is linked to civic engagement and social trust. However, since research is concentrated in and uniquely adapted to how philanthropy is organized in bridging-thin contexts, we may not fully understand the connection between social capital and philanthropy in a bonding-thick context where nonprofit organizations and civil society may not be the primary mobilizer of philanthropic resources. No similar quantitative research that provides a direct link between trust, networks and philanthropy in a non-Western/Northern context could be identified.

Alleviating this bias must start with developing a better understanding of traditions of giving and volunteering in bonding-thick cultures. Research conducted by Wilkinson-Maposa, Fowler, Oliver-Evans and Mulenga (2008) provides an interesting view of how the poor in Mozambique, Zimbabwe, Namibia, and South Africa help each other at the community level. Though on different continents, these countries are similar to Colombia in that all are characterized by high poverty, histories of colonialism, long-standing social upheaval, and familistic cultures. What the research team discovered was a clear lack of understanding by international aid groups, policy makers and NGOs about the reality of giving and reciprocity in the social fabric of the poor in southern Africa. Instead of being merely the recipients of top-down, vertically articulated philanthropic support, the poor in southern Africa regularly engage in reciprocal, horizontally articulated giving within their communities. The poor are both the source and recipients of help, and their social safety net is strongest when they have access to both horizontal and vertical aid.

While Wilkinson-Maposa, Fowler, Oliver-Evans and Mulenga do not directly address social capital as a course of study, their research uncovers a more organic dynamic between networks, trust and giving. Who the African poor choose to help and not help is clearly articulated in their answers to interviews with researchers. The African poor report that they do NOT help people who (directly quoted):

- you cannot trust;
- you are not on good terms with (those who treat you badly or are your enemies);
- who do not need help (people who are healthy but lazy);
- who will not help the poor (that is, the rich);

- who are of low moral character (violent, sly or dishonest people, thieves, criminals, cheaters and generally ‘bad people’);
 - who do not use help wisely (for example, spend money on alcohol); and,
 - who are ungrateful or selfish
- (Wilkinson-Maposa, Fowler, Oliver-Evans and Mulenga, 2008, p. 39).

Instead, the poor in southern Africa are more likely to help people in the following social networks (directly quoted):

- immediate family (spouse/partner, wife/husband, parents, children and siblings);
 - extended family (grandparents, grandchildren, cousins, nieces, nephews and others)
 - non-family (neighbors, friends, strangers and others)
 - mutual assistance groups (self-help associations, volunteer organizations, street committees, women’s clubs, work colleagues, grocery societies, and other such collective groups)
 - informal associations (burial societies, sports clubs, and other associations)
 - formal associations (formal and external organizations such as NGOs, religious institutions, welfare organizations and other volunteer organizations)
- (Wilkinson-Maposa, Fowler, Oliver-Evans, and Mulenga, 2008, p. 39).

Interestingly, the natural prioritization of social networks receiving the support of the African poor is listed from bonding-thick to bridging-thin.

While the southern African context will indeed differ from the Colombian context of giving (as Chapter IV will show), the point is that whom one trusts and with whom one associates matters, and in a broader sense, the cultural dynamic of trust and associations is key to shaping traditions of philanthropy in all societies.

Chapter IV. Dimensions of Colombian Philanthropy

In Chapter II, it was determined that different cultures exhibit different types of social capital. Colombian society is characterized by bonding networks and thick trust. Chapter III provided a review of the literature which seeks to understand the linkage between social capital and donor behavior. However, this literature is largely biased toward donor behavior in societies which are characterized by bridging networks and thin trust. Despite the bias, one essential fact is clear. When it comes to philanthropy, whom one trusts and with whom one associates matters. Therefore, it is not a distant theoretical leap to suggest that the type of social capital in which a society engages should play a role in the development of philanthropic traditions. If this assertion is true, Colombian philanthropy should be channeled through bonding networks and reinforced by thick trust.

As the following discussion will show, Colombian philanthropy is culturally constructed and dependent on a historical progression that is unique to Latin America in general and Colombia in particular. I will present this development in terms of three overlapping spheres of cultural influence. Critical to this discussion is a focus on the clues which suggest that Colombia's philanthropic traditions have emerged within channels of bonding-thick social capital, and in particular, mirror the Colombian society's preference for associating along vertically articulated social structures and concentrating trust along solidarity networks such as kinship and religion.

First, I will discuss the Catholic roots of philanthropy in Colombia, the Church's lasting effect on how Colombians understand the role and meaning of Christian charity,

and those responsible for carrying out charitable work today. Second, I will discuss the development of philanthropy within the context of the elite family and the pressure to give through the family business. Lastly, I will discuss the interplay between the related spirits of state-centrism and solidarity among the Colombian citizenry, which, only in the last two decades, have contributed to the formal development of a nonprofit sector.

Section A. The Religious Sphere:

Colombia's Philanthropic Roots in the Catholic Tradition

Even though a formal nonprofit sector is a relatively recent development in Colombia, charity and volunteerism is not a new or unfamiliar concept for the Colombian people. In particular, from the colonial period to modern day, community life has flourished around the work of the Catholic Church. Indeed, as many as 80 to 95 percent of Colombians consider themselves to be of the Roman Catholic faith. Giving as an affirmation of the Christian faith has always been a major motivation of Latin American philanthropy (Sanborn, 2005). During the colonial period, however, Christian charity was not carried out by individuals, but by collectives such as religious orders, brotherhoods, and lay beneficence associations (Thompson and Landim, 1997). These religious communities provided relief to the poor and marginalized while spreading the Catholic faith and traditions of Christian benevolence among the native and colonial populations.

The Church's charitable works were largely funded through a symbiotic relationship with the Spanish Crown and landed elites who were appointed to govern the colonial state. During three centuries of Spanish colonial rule (1550 -1810), the Church operated according to a hierarchical system known as the *Royal Patronage of the Indies*, through which it served as the sole government agency charged with the task of organizing civil society in Latin American nations (Thompson and Landim, 1997). In exchange for protection and privileges provided by the Spanish Crown, the Church carried out its mandate to evangelize to the local populations in order to legitimize the process of colonization (Villar, 1998). As Thompson and Landim (1997) observe,

The role of this institution – particularly by way of its orders like the Franciscans, Dominicans, Augustines and principally the Jesuits through with the Company of Jesus as well as the Sisterhood of Saint Charity – was to be fundamental in cultivating new spaces, initiatives and values which led to what we now call philanthropic ventures in the colonial era. Educational, health and social welfare establishments were almost all the responsibility of the church practically until the mid-nineteenth century (p. 339).

On a local level, the State-Church coalition also administered nearly all of the philanthropic resources of each municipality, funneling donations, pious works, and private bequests toward the public good. In terms of mobilizing private donations from the economic elite during the colonial period, “pious works were seen as a way to alleviate growing social inequality and the lack of political power of the marginalized classes” (Florez, 1997, p. 387).

Even after Colombia declared independence from Spain in 1810, the Church remained a pillar of power in Colombia's central government and continued to operate much like before as the principal state-supported charitable entity. The Church's dominance of civil society and influence in government affairs was repeatedly challenged during the political upheavals of the 19th and 20th centuries, during which a strong Liberal party sought to sever the church-state relationship and create a secularized government. The Liberal party's interest in placing social welfare under the direct control of centralized government agencies was seen as a significant move toward establishing the legitimacy of the emerging, but still weak nation-state. The state's ability to provide key public services was seen as a way to earn the favor of the Colombian people and establish order, particularly during a time period in which caudillos (political bosses), strong men and the landed elite grappled over local and regional power (Thompson and Landim, 1997).

In reaction to the Liberal party's push toward the secularization of public services, and amidst continued disorder, the Church emerged with a newly independent identity – a trend common to nearly all the nations of Latin America in the middle 1800s. As Thompson and Landim (1997) note,

Despite global advances in social liberalism, Latin America in fact remained heavily controlled by the caudillo, and the authoritarian and clientelistic state. The church, now legally separated from the state, became one of the most solid institutions in Latin America consolidating itself as a corpus of agents and organizations where the philanthropic institutions occupied a special place. From that new position, it continued being a strong ally of the state" (p. 341).

Therefore, the development of Colombia's civil society sector and philanthropic traditions was strongly influenced by the separation of church from its formal role as a state agency, and the church's ability to retain its political influence as an independent force ever since. As Colombia's Liberal movement sought to transfer the administration of schools, hospitals and orphanages to municipal governments, the Church initiated what would become a century-long alliance with the Conservative party, which supported ecclesiastical privileges and the Catholic education of Colombia's citizens (Villar, 1998).

By the late 1880s, the political pendulum swung in favor of the Conservative party. The passing of the 1886 Constitution ushered in a nearly 50-year era of rule by the Conservatives, which for a century cemented Catholicism as the official state religion and the Roman Apostolic Catholic Church's public role as the chief administrator of education and social services. Once again at the epicenter of Colombian civil society, though now influenced by the political and economic pressures of a new era, the Church organized private *Juntas de Beneficencia* (charitable associations) responsible for the supervision of schools and orphanages. These organizations were not largely supported by private donations, although landed elites were known to make large donations or bequests to the Church for these purposes. Instead, funding from the state and special taxes levied by municipalities constituted the majority of funding the Church required to provide education, healthcare, and social services to the masses (Villar, 1998).

By the 1930s, the Conservative party's dominance of Colombian government ended, and once again a strong Liberal party emerged. The Liberal party enacted another series of social reforms intended to secularize the government and return the administration of public education and social welfare to the state. The emerging

authoritarian state clamped down on civil liberties and individual freedoms and restricted the development of civil society for fear of the public's revolt to its oppressive policies. The rise of an authoritarian government prompted the development of contra-governmental organizations and guerrilla movements, strengthened by the personal networks of average Colombian citizens who sought social justice in an unjust society. Increasing polarization between Liberals and Conservatives led to a tumultuous, undeclared civil war known as *La Violencia*, in which more than 300,000 people died from 1945 to 1964 in political violence (Villar, 1998).

In 1958, as an attempt to end ongoing political violence and reestablish a democracy after a short but damaging dictatorship (1953 – 1957), the leaders of the Conservative and Liberal parties, the Church, and business associations initiated the *National Front*, an agreement to distribute political power by rotating presidential terms between Liberal and Conservative parties every four years (Villar, 1998).

Despite long-standing factional violence and the predetermined electoral results of the *National Front*, the Church throughout the middle 20th Century retained its strength as a pillar of Colombian community and spurred the creation of new faith-based confessional associations and educational institutions to fight against the “de-Christianization” of Colombian civil society, charity and advocacy.

As the only institution in civil society that maintained its structure intact after the military takeover, the church played a leading role in defending human and civil rights. In this strengthening of society, a decisive role was played by liberation theology and the guidelines of the Medellin (Colombia) and Puebla (Mexico) Conferences in the 1960s. These led a considerable portion of the clergy to ‘return to

the people,' in 'a preferential option for the poor' (Thompson and Landim, 1997, pp. 345-6).

Many members of the clergy severed ties with the Conservative party in favor of defending Colombia's poor and marginalized who were caught in the crossfires of guerrilla, paramilitary and armed forces.

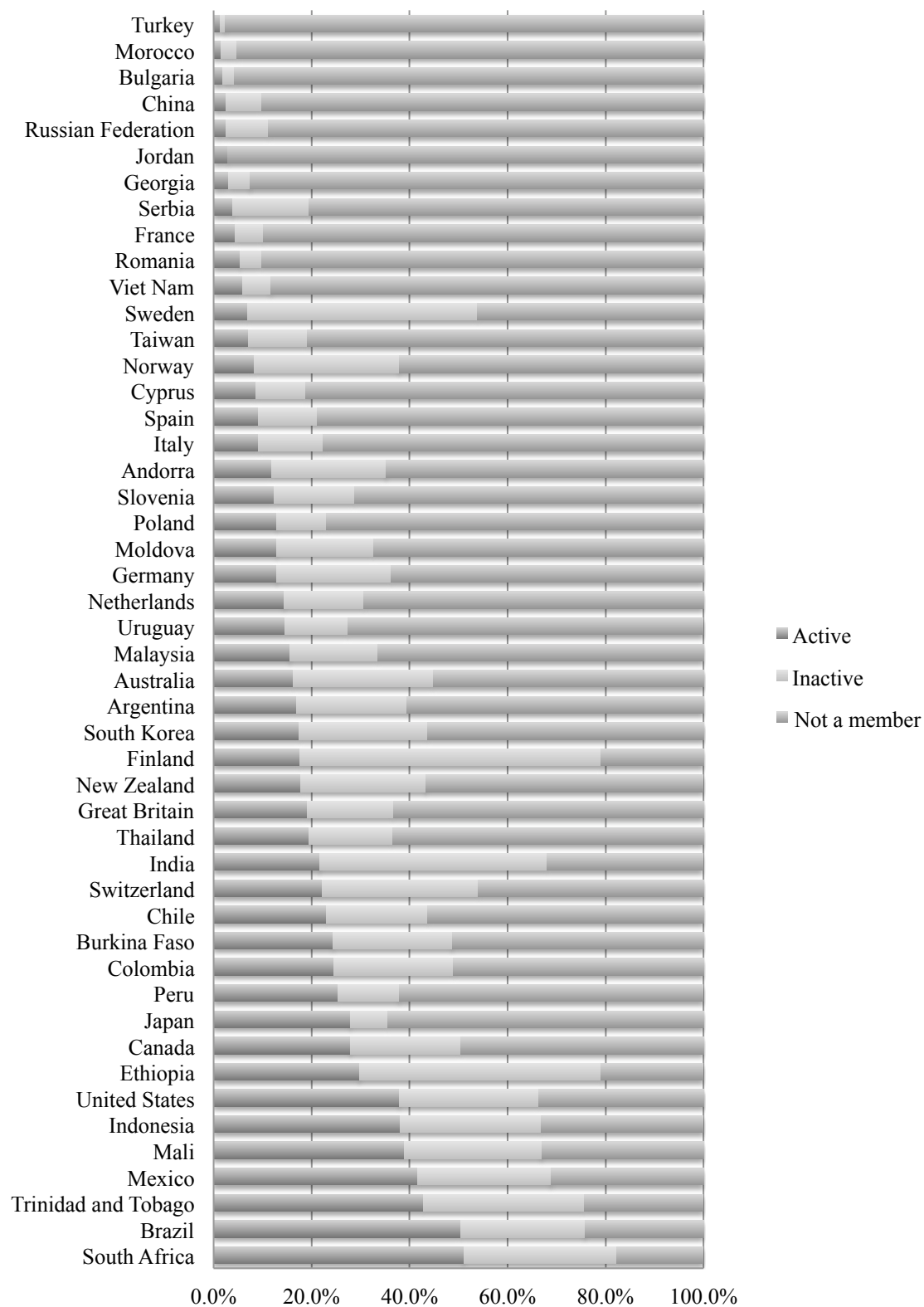
According to Villar (1998), the *National Front* allowed the Church to move in two directions at once. On one hand, the Church separated from the Conservative party, a move that led to the de-politicization of Roman Catholicism in Colombian society and the establishment of the Church as an independent mobilizer of Colombian civil society. On the other hand, some members of the clergy aligned themselves with left-leaning and populist secular NGOs who sought changes in the social, economic and political structures of the country. Encouraged by liberation theology, the Catholic clergy became a strong popular voice in the areas of human rights, public education, and empowering the poor.

Weakened by the *National Front*, the Colombian state consistently struggled to provide effective and efficient social services to the masses, leaving the Church to fill in the gap. Today, the Colombian citizenry continue to rely on the Church as the most ardent mobilizer of civil society and collective action. Furthermore, the organization of Colombia's nonprofit sector continues to be heavily influenced by a history of the Church's ability to maintain charitable control (in lieu of tax-driven, state control) in the areas of education, healthcare, social services and housing. Non-state agencies (including religious and secular organizations) provide 27.7 percent of these services (Gutierrez, Franco, and Avella, 2007). Combined, these four charitable fields account for 70 percent

of Colombia's civil society sector, as measured in terms of total expenditures (Salamon and Sokolowski, 2004).

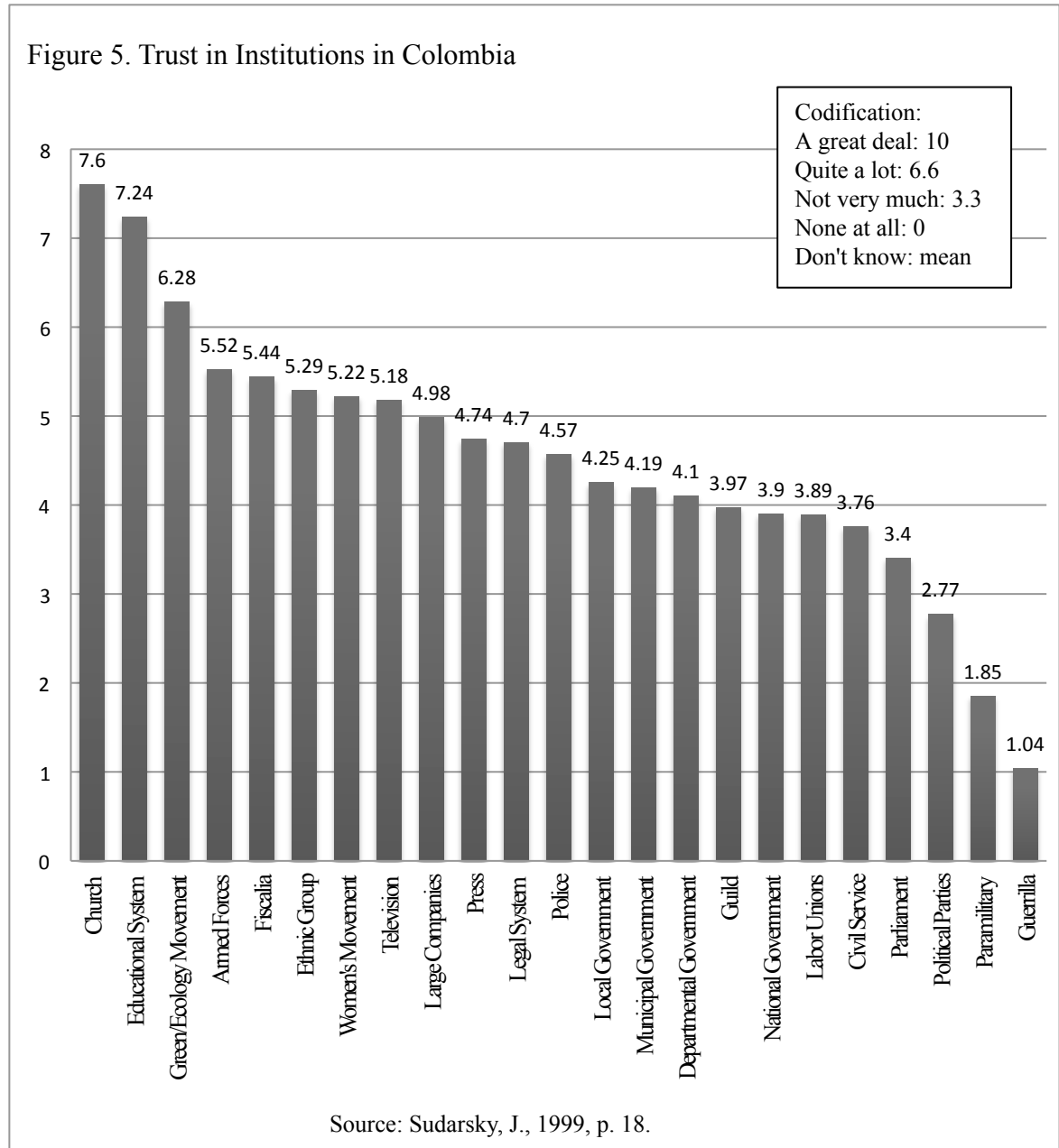
While the Church's role in developing Colombian traditions of giving and influencing donor behavior is certain, it is difficult to provide a true measurement of the Church's influence in Colombia's current philanthropic landscape. Catholic parishes and faith based organizations do not make information about their self-financing efforts publically available, so it remains difficult to assess precisely the influence that Catholic donors and parishes have in the provision of charitable services in contemporary Colombian society. Despite the unavailability of data for donations and tithes, the World Values Survey provides evidence that the Colombian citizenry's active membership in the church is higher than average when compared to other nations, as shown in Figure 4.

Figure 4. Global Comparison of Religious Membership



Source: World Values Survey Databank, 2005-2008 Wave

Corroborating this evidence, research by Sudarsky suggests that of all of Colombia's institutions, the Church enjoys the greatest amount of trust among the Colombian citizenry, as shown in Figure 5.



Because of the Church's high level of membership and trust and historical role in providing a social safety net for Colombian citizens, its ability to mobilize philanthropic

action and civil society cannot and should not be ignored. “Although the Church is certainly characterized by an emphasis on hierarchy and obedience to ecclesiastic authority, diverse tendencies of Catholicism in Latin America today have institutional expressions that form a part of broader civil society, and have strong political and civic dimensions” (Sanborn, p. 12, 2005).

The unique and historical role of the Church as a protector and mobilizer of civil society is particularly important to note in the context of social capital. Conventional social capital theory maintains that the dominance of one religious entity may not lead to building the thin trust and bridging networks that is believed to fuel philanthropy and create a strong civil society. High levels of thick trust and bonding networks, which are perpetuated by the presence of one dominant church, are not expected to result in high levels of philanthropic giving.

In reality, the conventional theory does not pass muster in Colombia in light of the available evidence. Even though records of giving and volunteerism are not released, historical accounts and evidence about membership and trust confirms that the bonding-thick dimension of the Catholic Church plays a major role in channeling charitable support, organizing collective action, and sustaining civil society. Christian principles of tithing, fellowship and charity are significant motivating factors in the philanthropic behaviors of Colombian citizens. Because Church records are unavailable, leading research projects about the dimensions of philanthropy do not include religious giving and volunteerism. To overlook religious giving as a form of philanthropy skews the measurement of Colombian philanthropy downward in comparison to other countries. (See Figure 6 for a more detailed illustration of Colombian philanthropy – which

excludes religious giving – in comparison to other nations that do count giving to religious organizations.)

Section B. The Private Sphere:

The Comingling of Family Wealth and Corporate Giving

Private philanthropy in Colombian society is often described with a distinctly familistic term: patriarchal (Letts, 2005; Sanborn, 2005; Villar, 1998; Rojas and Morales, 2005). This term stems from two related cultural influences. First is the traditional hierarchical organization of Colombian society in which an elite male embodies the role of a “parent” who provides for his “family” through the distribution of food, clothes and housing. “Family” in this case is not necessarily related by blood; instead, family includes all the people supported by the elite male and his assets – his wife and children, housekeepers, security guards, chauffeurs, the workers at his company and their families. Secondly, the use of this parental term is another reflection of the paternalistic style of giving inspired by Catholicism in which the clergy (“Fathers”) tend to the spiritual and corporal needs the Christian family. Rojas and Morales (2005) unite these distinctions, explaining that philanthropic giving in Colombian society is seen as a continuation of Christian community or a family of faith, united along the belief that “one’s fellow man is one’s neighbor” (p. 172).

Even in contemporary Colombian society, corporations cannot be conceptually separated from the nuclear and extended families who own them (Letts, 2005; Fukuyama

1995). Fukuyama (1995) notes in his description of the three “paths to sociability” (described in Chapter II) that few Latin American companies mature to a point that surpasses direct or significant family ownership, management and influence. In the Colombian context, corporate giving is an extension of the private philanthropy of the economic and social elite.

The traditional philanthropic ethos of the elite perpetuates a negative connotation of philanthropic work in Colombian society. As Thompson and Landim (1998) observe,

(Philanthropy) is viewed as an issue for the churches, the oligarchy, and the elites. Though its meaning and practice vary from country to country, the public as a whole generally view philanthropy as a form of social control by the ruling classes. In the case of individual philanthropists, giving has been viewed not as a culturally valuable obligation, but simply as a means of increasing one’s prestige and social status (p. 355).

The traditionally paternalistic sensibility that guides the donor-beneficiary relationship may reinforce patterns of social inequality and dependence in which the rich tend to give basic charitable assistance rather than support for transformative programs that empower the poor (Sanborn, 2005). Sanborn observes that historically speaking, “in societies marked by longstanding discrimination and social exclusion, the generosity of the elite did not always extend to the acceptance of universal suffrage and full citizenship rights for the broader population” (2005, p. 7).

Negative perceptions of the role of elite philanthropy in maintaining a status quo of discrimination and social exclusion may be changing, however. The role of the state and church is declining, and the private sector is becoming stronger. From the 1960s to

the 2000s, corporate social responsibility (“CSR”) and corporate foundations led by elite business owning families have emerged as the champions of a more progressive vision of civil society and leaders in the mobilization of private charitable resources to support it. Notable examples of large corporate foundations include the Fundación Corona, Fundación Carvajal and Fundación Exito.

By many accounts, Colombia stands out among Latin American nations for its especially strong tradition of corporate philanthropy. According to Sanborn, between 80 and 95 percent of the largest corporations in Latin America practice at least some type of philanthropy, including donations, employee volunteerism, and the direct operation of a foundation or social program (2005). In 1997, Rojas identified 94 corporate foundations with assets of nearly a billion dollars, or one percent of the Colombian GDP and five percent of total public expenditures in that year (Rojas and Morales, 2005). Of these, the ten largest foundations accounted for 97.7 percent of total foundation assets, and 60 percent are now 20 years old or older (Rojas and Morales, 2005). In comparison, other Latin American countries with much larger economies have seen an emergence of much smaller corporate foundations only in the last 15 years.

In 2005, Sanborn conducted a second count of private foundations in Colombia and found 122 entities that were private, nonprofit, legally autonomous, and dedicated to charitable objectives. Of these 122 entities, only 16 were identified as grant making organizations. Unlike the North American model in which the majority of foundations are primarily engaged in grant making activities and backed by an endowment created by one or more wealthy philanthropists, nearly all Colombian foundations were founded by a corporate parent or prominent businessman and are continuously resupplied by annual

profits (Sanborn, 2005, Rojas and Morales, 2005). The preference for corporate foundations could be linked with Colombia's familistic culture in which wealth is transferred not to charity in the form of an endowed trust but to the next generation of their offspring through the ownership and management of large companies, which in turn are used to generate wealth from which to be philanthropic. Sanborn (2005) is skeptical about the roots and implications of this practice in Latin America, writing,

For many of Latin America's civil society leaders, the scarcity of local grant making foundations represents a serious problem, given the chronic need for resources on the part of existing NGOs and community organizations. Some also see this as an indicator of persistent mistrust of the rest of civil society on the part of social and economic elites (pp. 16-17).

Whether or not this practice stems from distrust by the elite is somewhat debatable. It is equally as likely that in a society marred by political disorder and economic instability combined with the tremendous and urgent needs of a significant number of impoverished citizens, it would be seen as both fiscally unwise and socially irresponsible to endow huge resources in perpetuity to generate only a small percentage of charitable dollars each year.

Additionally, the familistic nature of Colombian society has resulted in very few professionally managed corporations that are independent of the families who started them. For most business-owning families, wealth is not always distinguishable in terms of two clearly understood pools of corporate and private assets. Instead, the line between what belongs to the family and what belongs to the family's company is much more blurry than many Western/Northern societies. The decision to give in perpetuity to

distant others is therefore complicated by the entanglement of assets and pressure to reinvest in a company that will be the bread and butter of one's progeny.

According to Agüero (2005), the recent emergence of corporate philanthropy, particularly in the form of CSR, throughout Latin America has been influenced by three factors. First, CSR is seen as a public relations response to social pressure and public scrutiny of the role of the company in society by a better educated and more demanding consumer. Echoing Agüero, Rojas and Morales (2005) cite recent polls conducted to measure the public's perception of trust in private companies and found that companies who are identified as generous and noble have a higher positive consumer image. Sudarsky's evidence of the Colombian citizenry's level of trust in various institutions as illustrated in Figure 5 substantiates this fact.

Secondly, Agüero (2005) found that CSR reflects the changing views of the corporate elite in a religious sense as Latin America has become more secular, and in a political sense in which businessmen aspire to be viewed as leaders in shaping the role of nonprofit organizations in an increasingly pluralistic, free market scenario.

Thirdly, according to Agüero (2005), CSR emerged from developments in business management theory and practice in which the company is conceptualized as a part of the larger society and that a healthy society is a more profitable place to conduct business. Because of these three factors, the philanthropic prerogatives of the economic and social elite are no longer popularly viewed as paternalistic tactics to reinforce an antiquated system of dependence between rich and poor. Instead, businessmen are seen as the main agents of social change and influential in creating a better quality of life for all the stakeholders in the community.

Similarly to Agüero (who writes about CSR in Latin America in general), Rojas and Morales (2005) describe the progression of the role of Colombian corporate philanthropy (in particular) since the 1960s in terms of three overlapping “modes of intervention.” First, beginning in the early 1960s, corporate strategy focused on assisting the needs of the poor working in or living near the factory. As previously noted, this strategy is characterized in a paternalistic model in which the factory owner considered these constituents to be an extended family. As the patriarch and provider, it was the owner’s role to determine how, when, and why to provide for them. Rojas and Morales point out that corporate foundations were first established in regions that were considered prone to communist influence, unionization and social rebellion. Giving to charitable causes was in part motivated by the desire to control the justice-seeking activities of the poor and marginalized classes rather than empower them to participate in a larger social and political dialogue. As Rojas and Morales (2005) write, “Assistance to the poor is characterized by a tutelary relationship between the owner and employees, rather than opening a public space of democratic deliberation. The representation of the factory as a big family was seen as a tool for moral rehabilitation and was motivated by paternalism and the fear of communism” (p. 173).

The second mode described by Rojas and Morales is characterized by a corporate interest in developmental philanthropy, a trend that was inspired by a dramatic increase in poverty in the 1980s. In that volatile era, the state was pressured to decrease public expenses by eliminating subsidies to social service agencies and charging fees for services. As the state relaxed its provision of a public social safety net, it delegated social responsibilities to the private sector. “Along with government and other civil society

organizations, foundations began to take part in the planning, co-financing and partnership with projects aimed to include the excluded and the vulnerable, leaving aside their former simpler role of ‘donors’ or ‘doers of social works’ in the previous assistencial model” (Rojas and Morales, 2005, p. 174). Corporate foundations became active in the development of new models of giving designed to help vulnerable populations break out of their social conditions by becoming self-sufficient. Economic empowerment programs such as micro-enterprise, community development, training programs, and participatory giving were largely propagated by CSR. However, political empowerment was not considered to be a priority as corporations found it in their best interest to reinforce the advantages of the corporation rather than the beneficiaries and micro-entrepreneurs (Rojas and Morales, 2005). Furthermore, throughout the process of delegating social services to the private sector, the state grappled with widespread public apathy and a declining perception of legitimacy in the provision of social programs.

The third mode described by Rojas and Morales was initiated in reaction to legislation. The 1991 constitutional reform provided official recognition of the civil society sector. Corporations began lending their considerable expertise in the business world to nonprofit organizations, investing in institutional strengthening and capacity building. Businesses were no longer seen as top-down donors but participants in attaining the social ideal of a “highly participatory civil society, a state with efficient institutions with clear and stable rules, systems of security for citizens that resolve problems, terrorism, subversion and other problems of violence, and thus the elimination of poverty and marginalization” (Consejo Gemial Nacional 1998, quoted in Rojas and Morales, 2005, p. 179). According to Rojas and Morales, this mode shifted the

responsibility of corporate foundations away from its traditional role of caring for the poor and vulnerable and toward the stewardship of society as a whole.

Unlike the landed elites of Colombia's pre- and post- revolutionary societies, many of today's wealthy business owning families are taking an active role in the private-public discourse to shape Colombian civil society. Because of their strong, vertically articulated influence and capitalist bias toward programs that "pay dividends" of strengthening the image of their companies or the environment in which the company conducts business, it is unlikely that corporate social responsibility will open many doors for non-elites to participate in giving decisions. While each of Rojas and Morales' three "modes of intervention" are increasingly progressive, each are vertically articulated, meaning that wealth and influence follows a downward arrow from top to bottom. None of the "modes of intervention" empowers workers and community members in participating in a discourse about how giving should be conducted and directed. The blurry line between family and company assets increases the complexity of inviting others in on the philanthropic process.

Still, in terms of social capital, this vertical mobilization of philanthropic resources has proved to channel a tremendous amount of private support toward causes and people in need, even if articulated in a patriarchal way. Like the difficulties of measuring the charitable impact of the Church, it is equally as difficult to assess the charitable impact of corporate social responsibility and the wealthy families who are leading the movement. In many Western/Northern societies, this information would be made public and transparent through a reporting structure to the government in which donors file for tax incentives and nonprofit organizations make their financial

information available for public view. Such reporting structures are practiced in Colombia, though as Irarrázaval and Guzmán (2005) observe, Colombia, like many Latin American countries, lacks the adequate supervisory mechanisms to monitor the use of tax incentives and financial reports, or to make them transparent.

Colombia does provide tax exemptions to charities and incentivizes giving through generous deductions. Donors who make donations to tax-exempt Colombian nonprofits can deduct up to 30 percent of their net taxable income for most donations, and up to 125 percent of their income for sports, culture and scientific research (Irarrázaval and Guzmán, 2005, p. 295). While significant tax benefits exist, many donors may choose not to report donations because of a concern that doing so will increase scrutiny of the donor's finances by tax authorities. Compounding this worry is the particularly high incidence of tax evasion in Colombia, a general lack of awareness about how to receive tax benefits, and excessive red tape required to accredit donations and recipients of donations (Irarrázaval and Guzmán, 2005).

Furthermore, "in Latin American countries... no system of accounting or compiling ongoing information has been developed on the amounts involved in tax incentives, nor are there any registers or databases to support true and effective follow-up on nonprofit work" (Irarrázaval and Guzmán, 2005, p. 289). For all of these reasons, it is assumed that the amount of charitable resources that are actually reported by individual and corporate donors is the tip of the iceberg. It is impossible to accurately estimate the significance of corporate responsibility or personal charitable giving in Colombia outside of the secular nonprofit sector, but it can and should be considered as a significant source and mobilizer of philanthropy in Colombian culture.

Section C. The Public Sphere:

The Development of a Nonprofit Sector at the Intersection of Private Solidarity and State-Centrism

On one hand, philanthropy in modern-day Colombia continues to be traditionally hierarchical and largely influenced by notions of Christian charity and the work of the Catholic Church. On the other hand, Colombian philanthropy is increasingly progressive, especially as market forces and the family-owned corporate sector continues to shape a new vision of Colombian society. Religion and family are both examples of bonding networks united along lines of thick trust and in-group solidarity. As Fukuyama infers, the path dependence of bonding-thick cultures is often coupled with a strong centralized state. This is because citizens in a fragmented and atomized society often prefer the presence of an authoritarian power to provide order and defend their lives and livelihoods (Banfield, 1958; Fukuyama, 1995). Colombia's strong central government and a pervasive ethos of state-centrism is evident of the type of "path to sociability" described by Fukuyama. As such, the Colombian public sector has played a vital role in shaping philanthropic practices, and more specifically, in articulating the meaning and use of private resources for the public good.

Like many aspects of the formation of Colombian society, the relationship between the state and philanthropic activity originated in the aforementioned symbiotic partnership between the church and the state. This relationship was redefined in the aftermath of *La Violencia* in the early 20th century, and especially in the midst of a

relatively stable period beginning with the *National Front* in 1958 and the liberation theology of the 1960s. It was during this era that the church and state officially separated, though Catholicism remained the official state religion until 1991. As previously noted, the *National Front* was an agreement between Liberal and Conservative parties to end the recurrent political violence of the early 1900s by distributing presidential and legislative power every four years. As a result of a pre-determined electoral process, the legitimate political participation of the Colombian citizenry became essentially moot. Citizen participation was restricted by the state in an attempt to decrease factional violence. By delegitimizing the political process, the *National Front* led to widespread political inactivity and apathy towards public matters among the Colombian citizenry (Villar, 1998).

At the same time, however, the Colombian citizenry was influenced by the liberal movements which characterized the era, most notably by the appeal of the Cuban Revolution, the strength of the Soviet Union, and the social justice rhetoric of Pope John XXIII (Villar, 1998). Blocked by a closed and corrupted political system and lured by leftist ideology, many citizens sought private justice alternatives and assistance outside of the public sphere. Indeed, widespread exclusion has led to much of Colombia's political conflict, whether it be related to a citizen's lack of access to the state and the political process, to legitimate means to solve conflicts, or to unbiased information accessed through a free civil society (Fernando de Angulo, 2002; Sudarsky 2008).

Beneath the authoritarian control of the state ran strong undercurrents of solidarity and reciprocity among the Colombian people, and particularly among the working poor and socially marginalized. In-group solidarity was reinforced both through the work of

politically active clergy and lay beneficence organizations as well as secular solidarity movements. In reaction to economic and political exclusion, Colombians created a series of solidarity movements to promote the interests of rural farmers, urban workers, women of all social classes, and professional networks. The result was the development of the *Sector de Economía Solidaria* (Solidarity Economy Sector), which Mera (2003) describes as “the group of cooperative organizations, auxiliary cooperative institutions, pre-cooperative organizations, mutual associations, and employees’ funds, which carry out economic- oriented activities but use net earnings (reserves) to improve human development of their stakeholders” (p. 2).

Solidarity Economic Organizations (SEOs) are horizontally articulated and designed to reinforce certain values such as the democratic and equal participation of the stakeholders and solidarity of the workforce. Members of SEO’s are expected to maintain a level of economic contribution each year, which is reinvested in activities that support the stakeholders. In 2002, Mera counted 3,959 SEOs with a membership of over 25,000 workers and 1.26 million stakeholders. A notable example of a prominent SEO is COOTRAFORD (*Cooperativa de Trabajo Asociado Agroforestales del Cauca*), an agro-forestry cooperative located in the city of Cauca whose members supply environmental services with high quality expectations and safety standards. COOTRAFORD also contributes to the social and economic development of its members by providing technical assistance, financial support and credit, social security, healthcare, literacy and education services, and research agreements with local universities. The workers’ wives also receive these and other services, including support for small business development. COOTRAFORD also participates in the political arena by advocating for the workers’

collective interests in land use and labor policies as well as conflict-resolution solutions between peasants and indigenous people.

According to Mera (2003), the success of the Solidarity Economy Sector is partly rooted in the ability of SEOs to fill the market failures of imperfect information and the exclusion of workers from the corporate structure. SEOs provide small production workers with access to larger financial resources, technology, healthcare and influence. SEOs allow stakeholders not only to obtain reliable employment, but the opportunity to participate in a legitimate and equitable network from which to mobilize collective resources to solve problems, enhance the development of human capital, and provide inclusion in the greater Colombian economy. The Solidarity Economy Sector is rooted in the bonding-thick form of social capital, which as Sudarsky (2008) suggests, is a useful and productive tool to propagate horizontal decision-making, democratic norms and peaceful social inclusion among the working poor.

Although SEOs were and continue to be independent institutions, their development has been fueled through significant support from the state, the progressive wings of the church, and a variety of international and multinational actors who see such institutions as a peaceful answer to providing aid and address the social issues behind escalating political violence. Certainly, solidarity groups are on the fringe of what many scholars consider to be part of the nonprofit sector and civil society.

In contrast to the mostly peaceful ideals of the Solidarity Economy Sector is the emergence of a more violent form of in-group solidarity, embodied in Colombia's notorious guerrilla groups, including the FARC (Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia), the ELN (National Liberation Army, now disarmed), and several others. At

their conception in the 1950s, these groups were inspired by Marxist ideology and took up arms to attain a vigilante form of social justice. Acting in solidarity against the economic elite and governing classes, Colombia's guerrillas became known worldwide as terrorists, kidnappers, and assassins. These efforts continue to be fueled by the lucrative proceeds of drug trafficking and extortion plots. While certainly not philanthropic entities, these groups, and the peasant self-defense groups who formed paramilitaries to oppose them, feed on bonding-thick social capital, and embody the term "bad civil society" as defined by Edwards (2004). Many citizens voluntarily turned to their brothers in arms in order to attain a level of social justice when the government was incapable or uninterested in providing serious protection or legitimate space for political participation. A great many other Colombian citizens were forced to join the ranks of guerrilla movements against their will and under duress.

In order to recruit members and maintain power, guerrilla leaders have often used a type of civil rhetoric designed to appeal to the hearts and minds of the Colombian people – a strategy that does not significantly differ from the pleas of many legitimate charitable organizations. Both seek to attain some vision of the greater good. The following 1999 conversation between Alfonso Cano, leader of the FARC, and a journalist with *Revista Cambio* was included in Jimeno's 2001 chilling account of violence and social life in Colombia.

Interviewer: The mandate from the gigantic manifestation for 'NO MORE!' as an expression of the so-called 'civil society' demanded that the armed actors stop violence and war in Colombia. Are you prepared to obey this mandate?

Cano (FARC): This manifestation can be taken in many ways. In this corner are the actors from the conflict. In the other the victims. This is how the papers read the situation... (But) a lot of people interviewed, questioned... raised social issues. No more corruption, no more unemployment... no more hospital closing. These arguments are the same as those which from another viewpoint, given another type of experience, are raised by ourselves. The conflict which the country is experiencing is, precisely, one of the manifestations of violence. Perhaps all the more dramatic, because all military confrontation is horrendous.

Interviewer (insisting): But the mass demonstration was against violence!

Cano: Violence is to do away with jobs, it is to deny the possibility of having a home. Violence is to have children die of hunger with no means to alleviate the situation... This exposes the big lie that there are no specific actors responsible for the conflict because the big agent of violence is the state. Everybody else is a victim... We, the revolutionary guerrillas, are a simple consequence of some supremely deep contradictions in Colombian society... There is always talk about the state's majesty, about the principle of authority which does not exist in Colombia (Revista Cambio, 1999, 28-9, quoted in Jimeno, 2001).

Jimeno explains that the message of the FARC and other similar armed groups is a reaction to a commonly held belief among Colombia's large number of working poor that the state is an instrument of oppression by the elite, and that the cultural representation of authority is arbitrary and deceitful (Jimeno, 2001, p. 231). The guerrilla appeal to the Colombian citizenry by fueling widespread distrust and inserting itself as a kind of Robin Hood figure in solidarity with the working poor. Pablo Escobar, infamous

narco-trafficker who rose to international infamy in the 1970s and 80s, adopted the morally nebulous sentiment of “steal from the rich and give to the poor.” Escobar, especially in the beginning of his infamy, was well known for his philanthropic works, which by scale trumped any legitimate public service provided the state in some regions of the country. Particularly in rural areas, Escobar very publically funded roads and bridges, zoos, schools and community centers in an attempt to establish a kind of moral justification from his followers.

Yet, in the wake of the long-standing disorder is frequent and everyday violence, destruction of homes and towns, displacement of families, and the terrorism and atomization of society in general. The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees estimates Colombia’s internal displacement to be among the most serious in the world with as many as 3.4 million people officially registered as internally displaced in 2010. Particularly vulnerable to the armed conflict are people living in Colombia’s rural and coastal areas. The Afro-Colombian and indigenous populations who live in these regions have been disproportionately affected by forced recruitment and sexual violence by armed combatants.

Though disorder has produced civil violence, it also serves as a rallying cry for the development of peaceful solutions. In her description of a landmine victim who lost an arm and vision, Rincon (2003) observes,

It is the horrible reality of the Colombian farmer’s land being used as a battlefield by groups that create a war in which 99 percent of Colombians do not want... Experiences like this, added to the fact that the State is incapable of preventing these painful everyday circumstances for Colombians or responding to necessities

in many regions, provide a strong motivation for civil society action” (2003, paragraphs 1 and 2).

In reaction to the constant threat of violence by armed actors coupled with an ingrained distrust of the state and widespread corruption among elected officials, the Colombian people have begun to take private action through the construction of legitimate civil society. The intense desire for peace has fueled much of the organic growth of the nonprofit sector over the last several decades. However, because the values embraced by an open civil society (equality, democracy, philanthropy) had been warped in the rhetoric of armed actors in the past, many Colombians continue to harbor a deep suspicion of charitable organizations in particular and civil society in general for fear that philanthropic support may be used not to help people in need but instead for far more violent or fraudulent purposes.

The state, too, has reacted in support of the development of a nonprofit sector. Doing so has allowed the state to regain a level of public support, trust, and legitimacy (Villar, 1999). Principally, the government established *Juntas de Acción Communal* (“JAC’s” or Community Action Committees) in small towns, counties and neighborhoods to provide a system of local representation to balance the centrality of the government in the capital city of Bogotá. The JAC of each community plays an important civic role as a center for voluntary action and community leadership. As Florez (1997) notes, “The JACs constituted an obligatory way to formalise participation over community affairs, aiming to shape decisions over the distribution of state funds and the development of priorities in neighbourhoods” (p. 388).

From 1962 to 1993, JACs grew from an estimated 9,000 organizations to 42,582 organizations (Florez, 1997; Villar, 1998). JACs are funded through a combination of government subsidies and philanthropic support from local politicians, neighborhood volunteers and private donors. Though riddled with clientelism and political corruption, JACs are typically involved in determining neighborhood priorities for the development of education, healthcare, social services as well as physical infrastructure programs (Villar, 1998).

The government also directly supports the emergence of citizens' associations to defend or unite the interests of underserved populations in favor or opposition of particular political reforms. For example, by establishing the *Asociación de Usuarios Campesinos* (Association of Peasant Users), the government sought to create a support base for agrarian reform. The *Asociación de Usuarios Campesinos* and its counterpart, the INCORA (Colombian Institute of Agrarian Reform), provide technical assistance, microcredit and advocacy for peasant users. The political backing of these reform groups backfired when two politicized factions emerged from the government's program: one supporting a radical view of independent agrarian reform and the other in opposition and dependence on the Agriculture Ministry (Flórez, 1997).

Women's organizations, including the *Union de Ciudadanas de Colombia* (Union of Colombian Women Citizens), the *Avanzada Femenina Insurgente* (Women's Insurgent Advance), and the *Union de Mujeres Democraticas* (Democratic Women's Union) emerged in the middle 20th century with the support of the state and political parties to promote suffrage and the public debate about gender discrimination in the private sector (Villar, 1998). After the right to vote was achieved in 1957, these women's organizations

became a model for the creation of NGOs which now focus on issues of gender equality and domestic violence. Today, women's NGOs include the Women's Citizen Union, which responds to the needs of upper- and middle-class women, and the Union for Democratic Women, which serves rural and working-class women (Villar, 1998).

In response to a global trend toward increased capitalism, pluralism, and the corresponding need to open a democratic space for discourse between the citizen and the state, the Colombian government has heavily invested in developing an independent civil society, especially in the last twenty years. Beyond providing direct support to advocacy and solidarity organizations, the state has introduced legislation which redefined the purpose of the civil society sector in Colombia. In particular, the concept of an independent civil society gained serious traction only after the passage of the 1991 Constitution. According to Flórez (1997), the 1991 Constitution provided a structural renovation in the relationship between the state and nonprofit entities and their legal responsibilities to support the Colombian people.

However, instead of seeding the emergence of a truly independent nonprofit sector, the 1991 Constitution and subsequent laws reinforced a state-centric notion of private action for the public good. As noted by Thompson and Landim (1998),

'State-Centrism' continues as a strong component of Latin American culture and still shapes people's understandings of the responsibilities between private and public, state and society, the individual and the collective. Democratization, however, brought a new actor into the scene: the market, and with it the centrality of profits. This also has changed the nature of the traditional debates over the roles of state and society in Latin America (p. 368).

While the government granted greater autonomy to the nonprofit sector and empowered the people of Colombia with freedoms of association, speech, and civic participation, it did not necessary outline philanthropy and volunteerism as unique to the nonprofit sector or civil society, but in a broader way in which donors and volunteers should participate in both private and public initiatives. Highlighted legislation includes:

- Article 103 of the Constitution of 1991 defines civil society organizations as mechanism for public participation in general, and specifies that the state should help train and support professional, civic, union, community, youth groups, charities, or common utility NGOs without detriment to the organizations' autonomy.
- Article 344 of the Constitution of 1991 allows government agencies to provide aid to nonprofit entities for the purpose of promoting activities in the public's interest and prohibits the use of congressional subsidies to nonprofit entities for the private benefit of state officials.
- Article 3 of Act 720 of 2001 defines "volunteer" as "any natural person who freely and responsibly, without pay for labor, provides time, labor and talent to build the common good as individuals or collectively, in public or private organizations or elsewhere." By the same decree, volunteers are to do the following: a) contribute to the development of people and communities based on the recognition of human dignity and the realization of the core values of the citizenry: life, liberty, solidarity, justice and peace; and b) promote, through selfless service, a generous and civic participation to articulate and strengthen the social fabric.

- Article 4 of Act 720 of 2001 defines appropriate activities for voluntary action as “the care of social services, civic, use of leisure and recreation, religious, educational, cultural, science, sports, health, development cooperation, environmental protection, antitrust economics, and research or similar purposes of general interest.”
- Article 9 of Act 720 of 2001 promotes voluntary action with the outright purpose of strengthening civil society and the state.

Despite the fact that only recently has a formal nonprofit sector emerged in Colombia, several attempts have been made to map its dimensions and scope. Work in this area has been lead by the Colombian Centre of Nonprofit Social Beneficence Entities (“CIDESAL”) and the Colombian Confederation of NGO’s (“CCONG”) in the early 1990s, Margarita Flórez in 1997, Rodrigo Villar in 1998 in partnership with Lester Salamon and the Johns Hopkins Comparative Nonprofit Sector Project, and Roberto Gutiérrez, Natalia Franco and Luis Felipe Avella in 2007.

Research has largely focused on secular nonprofit organizations as defined in a Western environment, meaning that to be counted in research, entities must fulfill the criterion of: 1) non-profit distributing; 2) private and autonomous from the state; and 3) formed to carry out a public mission. Despite these criteria (which were developed in the bridging-thin cultures of the United States and Netherlands), broad terminological conflicts persist among practitioners and academics regarding the concepts of civil society, non-governmental organizations, and nonprofit organizations in Colombia. According to Flórez (1997), even the term “NGO” insinuates only those nonprofit organizations that are influenced by “progressive movements” aimed at supporting

vulnerable populations through a commitment to social change. “Less progressive” and more traditional private assistance charities, religious charities and corporate foundations may enjoy the legal status of nonprofit entities but are not considered “NGO’s” (p. 392). Also in question are neighborhood and advocacy associations created by the government and political parties, corporate social responsibility programs, religious and faith-based organizations, co-operatives and solidarity sector organizations, and professional guilds and labor unions (Flórez, 1997).

Salamon and Sokolowski, leaders of the Johns Hopkins Comparative Nonprofit Sector Project, have provided perhaps the most comprehensive comparison of the size and scope of nonprofit sectors throughout the world. As illustrated in Figure 6, Colombia’s nonprofit sector and private philanthropy are significantly smaller than those of the Netherlands, Canada, and the United States, but comparable to other Latin American nations. However, it must be emphasized that even their results are skewed because the results for Colombia and other South American nations does not incorporate religious giving or tithing, and the criteria used in accounting for philanthropic giving did not consider quasi-sectorial philanthropic traditions within the state, family, or solidarity organizations. As such, this research significantly underestimates the level of philanthropy in Colombia and perhaps most of Latin America.

Figure 6. Global Comparison of Civil Society Sector and Private Philanthropy		
Country	Civil society sector workforce (paid staff and volunteers) as a percentage of the economically active population	Measurement of private philanthropy (giving and volunteering) as a percentage of GDP
Netherlands	14.40%	4.95%
Canada	12.10%	2.40%
United States	9.80%	3.94%
United Kingdom	8.50%	3.70%
Argentina	4.80%	2.36%
Spain*	4.30%	2.10%
Peru*	2.50%	0.33%
Colombia*	2.40%	0.60%
Brazil	1.60%	0.50%
Mexico*	0.40%	0.12%
*Data on giving and volunteering to religious workshop organizations not available.		
Source: Salamon, L.M.; Sokolowski, S.W.; and Associates, 2004.		

Based on this scant evidence of giving to secular nonprofit organizations, suggestions that “there has never been a ‘culture of philanthropy’ in Latin America as it is understood in the United States” (Thompson and Landim, 1998, p. 369), or that cultures defined by bonding-thick social capital are less philanthropic is myopic in their assessment. A culture of philanthropy flourishes in Colombia, and though it does differ in scope and meaning from philanthropic traditions found in the United States or Western Europe, scholars should take care to develop tools to accurately assess the level of giving in Latin American context. What must be considered in future research about the link

between philanthropy and social capital therefore, is the full Technicolor version of all the ways Colombians give and volunteer, both within and outside of the nonprofit sector.

Chapter V. Summary and Considerations for Future Research

This paper triangulates three overlapping areas of study: 1) research on social capital in the comparative perspective (Banfield, 1958; Putnam, 1993, 2000; Fukuyama, 1995; 2002); 2) research which links social capital to philanthropic giving (Bekkers, 2003, 2005; Bekkers and Bowman, 2009; Brooks, 2005; Brown and Ferris, 2007; Uslaner, 1999; Wiepking and Maas, 2009); and 3) available comparative data about trust, membership and giving (Salamon, 2005; Salamon and Anheier, 1998; Salamon and Sokolowsky, 2004; World Values Survey Databank, 2005-2008). These areas of study were then put into theoretical practice through an analysis of Colombian philanthropic traditions. The following five considerations summarize the lessons learned in examining social capital and philanthropy in the Colombian context.

First, whom one trusts and with whom one associates matters. This simple truth, generalized over a society, forms the underpinnings of particular culture of philanthropy. The development of trust and networks depends on a culture's "path to sociability" which is influenced by history, politics, and values over time (Fukuyama, 1995). A culture's philanthropic traditions are constructed along its particular path to sociability. Social capital is one useful lens from which to observe and understand philanthropic traditions around the world.

Secondly, when attempting to understand a particular culture of philanthropy and its linkage to social capital, it is most useful to understand the type of trust and networks in which the people of that culture engage and describe them in an unbiased way. Literature has often used comparative terminology such as "high trust" and "low trust"

(Fukuyama, 1995); “amoral familism” versus “enlightened self interest” (Banfield, 1958); and “moralistic” trust versus “strategic” trust (Uslaner, 2002). This terminology insinuates a better-worse scenario, and by doing so, inserts a kind of cultural superiority at worst and normative bias at best. For the purposes of formulating a stronger comparative study, one must overcome cultural bias by understanding social capital in terms of its type. Putnam (2000) theorizes that social capital could be comparatively viewed in terms of varying dimensions of bridging and bonding networks and thin and thick trust. Fukuyama (2002) also acknowledges the weakness of using terminological dichotomies, explaining that no culture has more or less social capital, rather, trust is culturally-constructed along different types of networks (kinship groups or lineages, ethnic groups, village associations, religious organizations, government and political associations, civil society organizations, etc.). While there may be other ways to describe social capital, it was most productive to describe the Colombian context as generally bonding-thick in this paper.

Thirdly, according to literature, we expect to see a connection between thin trust, bridging networks and a robust nonprofit sector. Theoretically, philanthropy is most likely to flourish in such an environment. However, the development of a secular nonprofit sector is only a recent phenomenon in Colombia. Historically, a significant portion of philanthropic activity has been mobilized through religious, family, state, and solidarity networks. This observation is critical because many scholars engaged in the comparative study of philanthropy and civil society overlook these indigenous philanthropic traditions, and by doing so, offer a misleading view of philanthropic activities in countries like Colombia (see Figure 6). While data is not currently available

to pinpoint how much philanthropy takes place outside of secular nonprofit organizations in Colombia, we can conclude that current methods of comparative study have room to be more inclusive of indigenous philanthropic traditions in non-Western/Northern cultures.

Fourthly, instead of hindering philanthropic activity (as literature expects), the bonding-thick dynamic of social capital is a powerful mobilizer of philanthropic activity in a fragmented and atomized society like Colombia. This type of social capital provides a culturally relevant means for donors to understand and trust those they are helping and how their giving impacts the community. Conversely, in cultures characterized by the bridging-thin dynamic of social capital, donors may be able to have a more faith that nonprofits organizations are trustworthy and will use charitable donations to help distant others. In the case of Colombia, the nonprofit sector has only recently emerged in the last quarter century, and the Colombian citizenry is still in the process of determining its role and meaning in their cultural context. Traditions of giving and volunteerism along lines of bonding-thick social capital are unlikely to fade, and Colombian citizens may never utilize nonprofit organizations in quite the same way that some bridging-thin cultures do. From an international aid perspective, instead introducing practices that have been advantageous in bridging-thin cultures, it may be more productive to support the development of indigenous philanthropic traditions (Letts, 2005).

Lastly, more research is needed to test these the assumptions presented in this paper in two areas. First, more information is needed about philanthropy in the Colombian culture and the applicability of this approach to studying the interplay of philanthropy and social capital in such a context. Questions that merit answers are:

exactly how much do Colombian donors channel philanthropic giving through bonding-thick relationships, and particularly those outside of the nonprofit sector? Do international actors attempt to understand the cultural dynamics of native Colombian philanthropy, and if so, are attempts made to bolster indigenous traditions or to change them? How is fundraising conducted in a bonding-thick environment like Colombia, and is this question even relevant considering the tendency toward collective action of Colombian citizens through vertically articulated and/or bonding-thick organizations like the church, the state, solidarity organizations, and family-owned companies? Can the considerations described in this paper be applied to other non-Western/Northern cultures around the world?

Finally, an expansion of the ideas presented in this paper can transcend giving in Colombian society toward the development of techniques for the cross-cultural comparative analysis of giving and volunteerism. Several sources of comparative study provide glimpses into cultures of philanthropy around the globe, but none provide a full picture. The fifth wave of the World Values Survey tracks political and sociocultural change in 57 countries but provides little data that is directly pertinent to philanthropic studies. Solomon's work with the Johns Hopkins University Comparative Nonprofit Sector Project provides interesting data about private giving to nonprofit organizations, but the study is not designed to include details about giving outside of such institutions. CIVICUS offers analyses of the dimensions of civil society in different cultural contexts, but does not delve into issues of philanthropic studies. Still other attempts have been made to qualitatively describe how culture, region and religion influence philanthropic giving. Hamilton and Ilchman (1995) edit an interesting compilation of works by

anthropologists and sociologists that describe traditions of giving in different cultures but offer no basis from which to compare these traditions and dimensions.

Despite the availability of certain types of data, philanthropy in non-Western and non-Northern contexts remains poorly understood. Future research should focus on the development of a foundation of criteria in order to objectively analyze and compare indigenous philanthropic traditions in different cultural contexts. Such a body of research could be used to inform the activities of transnational actors and public policy makers as well as those of grassroots NGOs and indigenous philanthropists. Using this kind of research, we may have a deeper understanding of how much philanthropy occurs within the nonprofit sector (religious and secular) versus other sectors of society (families, companies, social economy organizations and mutual aid societies, political organizations and the state) in non-Western/Northern countries. Perhaps a clearer understanding of the social capital dimensions of bonding and bridging networks, thin and thick trust, and vertical and horizontal associative structures could be utilized as a launching pad for the development of this kind of comparative research.

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